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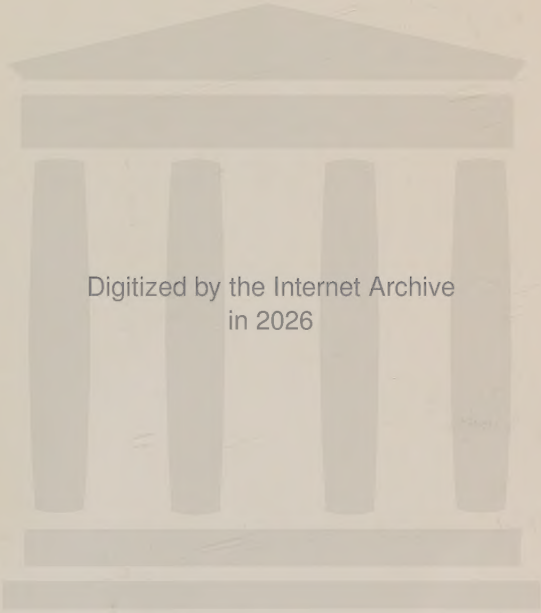

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NOTES,

PRACTICAL AND EXPOSITORY,

ON

THE GOSPELS:

FOR THE USE OF

BIBLE CLASSES, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, CATECHISTS, AND OTHER PIOUS LAYMEN.

"Verbum Dei est Christus, Qui non solùm *sonis*, sed etiam *factis* loquitur hominibus."
St. Augustine.

BY

REV. CHARLES H. HALL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

St. Luke, "whose praise in the Gospel" was in the Churches at an early period, while he has faithfully described the history of our Lord, and the chief acts of His Apostles in establishing the Church, has allowed all knowledge of himself to remain in oblivion. Who and what he was, we find it difficult to say. The fathers agree that he was a native of Antioch in Lysia and a physician,—a profession at that time practised by slaves or freedmen. He journeyed with St. Paul at times; since he speaks in the first person, Acts xvi. 11, to xvii. 1, and resumes it after St. Paul's second arrival in Greece. He probably remained in his company about five years, and is mentioned by St. Paul in terms of affection. 2 Tim. iv. 11, Col. iv. 14, Phil. 24. Some assert that he afterwards preached the Gospel in Africa. It is supposed that in the Introduction to his Gospel (verses 1–4) he intimates that he was an eye-witness of the life of Jesus. If so, he is to be ranked as one of the seventy disciples. This was the opinion of Origen and Epiphanius, and is defended by Dr. Whitby. Others suppose him to have been converted by St. Paul.

The same obscurity covers the time and occasion of his writing the Gospel. Some place the date 15, some 22, and again 27 years after the Ascension. It was written before the book of the Acts (see Acts i. 1), and that was written after St. Paul had been two years in Rome as a prisoner. Acts xxviii. 30. Yet Theophylact places the date of this Gospel ten years before the death of St. Paul, and Irenaeus is positive that it was written after his death. It is impossible to fix the date with certainty.

The question therefore becomes important, *What authority is to be claimed for this Gospel?* Two theories are offered in reply. 1. That St. Luke was one of the seventy disciples, and a recipient of the first inspiration in common with the Apostles. This fact is possible. It depends however upon very slight grounds of argument. *See Dr. Whitby's Intro. to St. Luke.* 2. The unanimous consent of

PACIFIC SCHOOL

the ancient Church to the authority of St. Luke as an inspired writer. This is based on the fact that this Gospel has never been doubted. It was written when Apostles were living, was probably known to St. Paul and St. John, was received by Churches which were under the direction of infallible guides, was accepted by the same authorities, that have settled for us the other portions of Holy Writ—and was received into the Canon by the Councils which determined once for all this matter. They who came first in order after the Apostles had it in their power to decide what writings were to be admitted into the Canon, and what rejected. They were able to determine facts, which were then recent, of which we can form no judgment now : and we believe that the light of inspiration, or that extraordinary gift of the Spirit which produced the Scriptures of the New Testament as one of its operations, did not expire until its whole work was done, and the Canon sealed by competent authority. To give currency and authority to inspired writings after they were published, was surely as important a work, as to give them birth. Hence after inspiring individuals to write "all truth," it was essential that the Church should have a co-ordinate power to determine what writings were inspired. This view, which is carried out by facts, gives a firm basis of historical authenticity to this Gospel. The same authorities and Councils of Bishops, which decided the character of the Canon, which rejected the Epistle of Clement, and sustained those of John, James and Peter, with the Apocalypse ; declared this Gospel to be a true portion of God's Sacred Word. St. Luke was more learned and polished than the other Evangelists. His work occupies a middle station between the simplicity of the two former Gospels and the spiritual and doctrinal style of St. John. He has recorded some things omitted by the others; for instance, the birth of John son of Zachary, the Census, the scenes with Simeon and Anna, the meeting of the boy Jesus with the Rabbis, the parables of the good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the rich man and Lazarus, the wicked judge and the Publican and Pharisee ; the miracle of healing the woman ill for eighteen years, cleansing ten lepers, and restoring to life the son of the widow of Nain ; the accounts of Zaccheus and the penitent thief, and the walk to Emmaus.

"Almighty God who calledst Luke the Physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, to be an Evangelist and Physician of the soul ; may it please Thee that by the wholesome medicines of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diseases of our souls may be healed, through the merits of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

CHAPTER I.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

CHAPTER I.

1. *Forasmuch as many.* The writer does not here speak of the other genuine Gospels, as we perceive by his own words. For the *many* who had related the history of these things were those who received their accounts from such as "from the beginning were eye-witnesses and servants of the Word." But St. Matthew and St. John were themselves eye-witnesses. While St. Mark cannot be spoken of as "many," even if his Gospel (which is doubted) were then written. Nor are we obliged to refer these words to the false and heretical treatises and narratives which were composed even in the first century. There were, beyond doubt, many accounts given by uninformed Christians, in which the truth was more or less obscured by private mistakes and false opinions. St. Ambrose speaks of a Gospel said to have been written by the twelve Apostles; another by one Basilides, and again another by Matthias. These were probably forgeries. Again a converted Greek nobleman such as Theophilus, would be very likely to receive vague and contradictory accounts of the Christian faith, in letters from Syria, or in treatises by ignorant or designing persons, and be troubled in mind for want of correct and reliable information. He may possibly have applied to his friend St. Luke. At all events, this narrative from him, a friend and companion of St. Paul, and acquainted with the rest of the Apostles (Acts xxi. 17–19), a visitor to the scene of the events which he relates, and himself a learned and pious man—would be peculiarly acceptable to Theophilus. We must bear in mind this design of the writer, to build up his friend in the faith, to correct the information given by partial or false records, and to set forth in a classified series the events of the life of Jesus; and while St. Luke was thus earnestly employed, the Spirit of God filled his heart and guided him into truth, so that he gave to the Church at large, such a narrative as was at once accepted, and afterwards was approved as a true portion of the Canonical Scripture. ¶ *Taken in hand.* Undertaken. ¶ *To set forth in order a declaration.* To give the world a complete history of the facts of the Christian faith. He designs to substitute a veracious Gospel in the place of such as were unworthy of confidence. ¶ *Which are most surely believed among us.* Among Christians: such things as were taught to all on their admission to the Church. St. Luke has written this preface in elegant Greek. The words *most surely believed* are in the original one word, yet requiring many in the translation. The whole force of it is—such things as are most surely believed

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were[a] eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to me also,

a Heb. 2. 5; 2 Pet. 1. 16; John 15. 27.

to have been thoroughly accomplished. These were the great facts of the life of Christ. They were satisfactory fulfilments of the ancient revelation of God to the prophets, and were now fully believed, after their accomplishment, by the whole Christian world. We may learn from this, that the early Christians had at this time been guided into all truth, according to the Lord's promise (John xvi. 13): and again, that the object of the inspired writers, was to set before us in order, these chief and spiritual truths, which are necessary to our sanctification and salvation. All beyond this they left to oblivion, or to the imperfect vehicle of human tradition. We are, then, to expect in the Scriptures those truths which are essential to holiness of life and salvation.

2. *Even as they delivered them.* All the first witnesses, Apostles, disciples and others. He is a sure witness who gives a true account of the facts of the Gospel as the whole company of the Apostles declared them. ¶ *From the beginning.* St. Luke began his account with the conception of John the Baptist. But the disciples were eye-witnesses only from the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, when He was thirty years old. The other information he, as they, gleaned from the testimony of those persons who were acquainted with the facts. ¶ *Eye-witnesses.* Those who had seen the events as they occurred. Our chief source of knowledge of *facts*, is the witness of credible persons. ¶ *Ministers of the word.* This may mean the Gospel, which is often called the *word*. Luke v. 1; Acts vi. 2. Many ancient and modern writers interpret it of the Logos, *The Word*, viz. our Lord Jesus Christ. See John i. 1. It seems more natural to say eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, i.e., Christ. The reader may choose that which

having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in [b]order, most excellent[c] Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the

b Acts 11. 4. *c* Acts 1. 1.

seems most probable to himself. It is certain from these words that St. Luke was not a disciple *from the beginning*, or he would have stated the fact.

3. *It seemed good to me also.* How natural seems the course of his proceeding. From these motives he thought best to write to his friend, while at the same time the Holy Ghost was working in him to will and to do of His own good pleasure. He does not deny, that it also seemed good to God to inspire him. ¶ *Having had perfect understanding.* Or, as the words may be rendered, "having carefully investigated every thing from the very first," or "having traced all things to their sources." He made a careful and scrupulous examination of all things which relate to the matter on which he was about to write, and therefore was qualified, so far as his faculties went, to give a veracious and complete history. Matthew and John speak with the simplicity of unlearned men, yet eye-witnesses of what they are saying. St. Luke as a careful student of facts from the witness of others. God moved over their minds by a secret, yet sweetly prevailing spiritual influence, to keep them from error, and to make them worthy teachers of the Gospel. This secret power we term their *inspiration.* ¶ *In order.* In an exact and perspicuous narrative, such as the subjects demand. This does not require *order of time*, but of subject. St. Luke, while following the order of the events in the life of our Lord, sought also to classify his materials, in order to aid his friend to understand the foundations of his belief in Christ. ¶ *Most excellent Theophilus.* He was some Greek or Roman convert, a man probably of some distinction; or perhaps a governor of a province, as the words *most excellent* were often addressed to such. Acts xxvi. 25. We know nothing of him be-

[a]certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 ¶ THERE was in the [‖]days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course [b]of Abia; and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, be-

a John 20. 31. ‖ Before the common account called Anno Domini the sixth year.

b 1 Chron. 24. *c* Gen. 7. 1; Job 1. 1.

yond the fact that St. Luke was his friend, and wrote for his benefit this Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. The name is composed of two Greek words, upon which Bede thus comments: "Theophilus means 'loving God,' or 'being loved by God.' Whoever then loves God, or desires to be loved by Him, let him think this Gospel to have been written to him, and preserve it as a gift presented to him, a pledge intrusted to his care." Some would have it that the name was adopted by the writer, that he might write to all Christians under its cover. But such conjectures are not safe.

4. *The certainty.* Be made certain beyond all doubt. ¶ *Thou hast been instructed. Catechethes*, from whence comes the word to *catechize.* Theophilus, as a Christian disciple, had already received some instruction in divine things, preparatory to his baptism. Naturally this instruction would follow the order of the words of baptism, to inform him concerning Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And the first Creed which we have was built on these three names. Bp. Horsley says: "We have more, then, than the mere testimony of St. Luke for the facts which he relates; we have the express information from him that these facts formed the catechetical instructions which were learned by the early converts to Christianity." Here ends this Preface. The remainder of this Gospel is a plain narration of events.

5. *Days of Herod.* Herod the Great. See Matt. ii. 1. ¶ *Course of Abia.* See 1 Chron. xxiv. 1. David divided the priests into twenty-four classes for their greater convenience in ministering in the temple, "as the duty of every day required." 2 Chron. viii. 14. Each course, from this circumstance, seems to have been called a *daily* course, though the period of its service lasted a week. Abia or Abijah received the eighth place of the twenty-four. ¶ *Of the daughters of Aaron.* A descendant of Aaron and of the priestly tribe. It was a Levitical law that no man should marry out of his tribe (Numb. xxxvi. 7), although this was sometimes disregarded. Ezra ii. 61; 2 Chron. xxii. 2. John the Baptist was of the tribe of Levi on both sides, while our Lord was of the tribe of Judah, "of which Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Heb. vii. 14. The former announced the change of priestly office. The latter established the spiritual service, which is common to all nations.

6. *Both righteous.* They were both obedient to the will of God as contained in the Old Testament Scriptures. As we sometimes imagine that all the Jewish people were great sinners before God, it is well to notice the record of the few who, as Jews, were eminently holy, walking by the faith which their forefathers had illustrated. ¶ *Before God.* They were truly, sincerely righteous. ¶ *Walking in.* Living according to the law of Moses. Thus David loved to liken a righteous life to the walking in a set path. See Ps. xvi. 11; cxix. 35. ¶ *Commandments and ordinances.* The laws and the justifications, or rites of the Levitical system. They obeyed God in His commands, and as pious Jews they preserved inviolate the rites and customs which He had ordained. ¶ *Blameless.* According to their imperfect system, they were truly pious persons.

7. *Well stricken in years.* They were very old, so as to render it naturally

cause that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course.

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to [a]burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying[b] without, at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of[c] the altar of incense.

a Ex. 30. 7, 8.

b Ex. 30. 7; Lev. 16. 17; Rev. 8. 3, 4. *c* Ex. 30. 1.

impossible for them to have children. ¶ *Was barren.* "Not only Elisabeth, but the wives of the patriarchs also, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, were barren, which was accounted a disgrace among the ancients. Not that their barrenness was the effect of sin, but ordained rather for your benefit, that when you saw a virgin giving birth to the Lord, you might not be faithless."—*St. Chrys.* ¶ *Elisabeth.* The wife of Aaron was thus named. Ex. vi. 23.

8. *Before God.* In the temple. God was peculiarly present to be worshipped by sacrifices and prayers. ¶ *Order of his course.* He was ministering with others of the course or family of Abia, according to the customs of the temple.

His lot was. The duties of the temple service were numerous and laborious. To secure their exact performance, certain duties were assigned by lot to each person. It had fallen to Zacharias to burn incense. ¶ *To burn incense.* This is an odoriferous gum, which is obtained from a tree anciently called *Thurifera*, resembling a pear tree. During the summer heats incisions were made into the tree, whence this gum issued. That brought from Saba was the best. Mixed with stacte, onycha, and galbanum (Ex. xxx. 34), it was called the holy perfume, and was used only in the temple. It was burned twice a day in the Holy Place (Ex. xxx. 7, 8) by the ordinary priests, and on the day of Atonement by the high priest in the Holy of Holies. Lev. xvi. 13. ¶ *Into the temple of the Lord.* The Sanctuary or Holy Place. See Matt. xxi. 12. There stood the altar of incense. When the priest entered this to offer incense, notice was given by the sound of a bell, and the people knelt in silent prayer in the courts without.

"'Twas silence in thy temple, Lord,
While slowly through the charmed air
The spreading cloud of incense soared,
Charged with the breath of Israel's prayer."

10. *Whole multitude.* The people of all classes. The Jews visited the temple twice a day, to be present at its solemn services, and to offer their prayers and gifts. See Acts iii. 1. ¶ *Praying without.* Incense rising upwards in a white cloud of pleasant perfume, was the instructive symbol of prayers ascending to God. Rev. viii. 3, 4.

11. *An angel of the Lord.* A glorious and bright appearance in the form probably of a man, though with marks and characters to show that he was a celestial messenger. There were numerous accounts of these Divine messengers in the Old Testament, some of whom were creatures. Gen. xix. 1; xxxii. 1, 2. And One who at times appeared, assumed the honor of the Son of God. Gen. xviii. 22. It is an awful thought, that whenever sinful man, even at his best estate, is brought face to face with a spiritual being, he feels instantly the overpowering conscience of sins, and the mortal terrors of their punishment. Is. vi. 5. Hence while the angel appears in a form of beauty and gentleness fit for his nature and mission, Zacharias is in great terror. Centuries had passed since an angel had been seen. The sight was as unexpected as it was alarming. ¶ *The altar of incense.* This altar stood near the vail, by the ark of the

12 And when Zacharias saw *him,* he was troubled,[a] and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

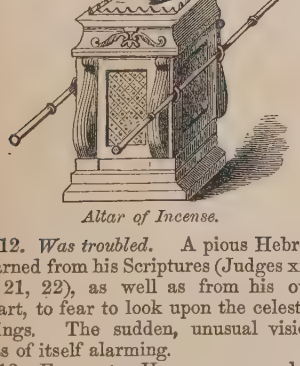
14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink[b] neither wine nor strong

[a] Jude 6. 22; & 13. 22; Dan. 10. 8.

[b] Num. 6. 3; Judges 13. 4.

testimony, in the Holy Place. It was made of shittim wood, and overlaid with plates of pure gold. The length and breadth of it were each one cubit, and the height two cubits. On the four corners were golden horns, and a crown or scroll work of gold ran around the top. The priest placed upon it the censer of burning incense. As Zacharias had done this, and was about retiring, he discovered suddenly on the north side of the altar, as it were in the cloud of incense, the form of the angel. See Ex. xxx. 1–11.



Altar of Incense.

12. *Was troubled.* A pious Hebrew learned from his Scriptures (Judges xiii. 6, 21, 22), as well as from his own heart, to fear to look upon the celestial beings. The sudden, unusual vision, was of itself alarming.

13. *Fear not.* He encourages him that he may listen attentively to the message. ¶ *Thy prayer is heard.* Zacharias, besides praying for the coming of the Messiah, as all pious Jews then did, had doubtless earnestly desired children. His prayers are now to be answered beyond his expectation, and a child given, who was to become a great prophet before the Lord.

14. *Many shall rejoice.* Not so much his relatives, as those who should be led by his preaching to receive the Gospel of Christ. It was a promise of the future excellence and usefulness of this child which was to be born.

15. *Shall be great.* Our Lord declared that, "among those born of women, there had not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. xi. 7), i. e., that among men born up to that time, there had been no one so highly favored by God. His greatness consisted in his privilege of announcing the immediate coming of the Messiah, and the gracious zeal and eloquence with which he did it. John x. 41. It is, therefore, described as being great *in the sight of the Lord.* ¶ *Shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.* Wine was the fermented juice of grapes. All other preparations of stimulating drinks, whether from grains or the palm, were called by the general name *strong drink.* The Eastern nations procured a liquid of an intoxicating kind from the palm tree, which grows in that portion of Asia; also from apples and grains. The Jews did not understand the chemical art of distilling liquors, and of course had no strong drink in the modern sense. The evil, however, was much the same, as we read of *drunkenness* as being known to them. Is. v. 22; Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. Those who aimed at a high degree of holiness, practised abstinence from every thing of the kind, and followed a noticeable and ascetic mode of life. They were called Nazarites. Judges xiii. 4, 5; 1 Sam. i. 2. By such signs all the Jews recognized a man of

drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

God, and listened to him with reverence. Matt. xxi. 32. ¶ *Filled with the Holy Ghost.* Divinely inspired for the prophetic office. He was to reveal and preach the kingdom of heaven as being at hand, and to make ready the people for Christ. This he could do only as God should instruct and guide him. He received the Spirit, not in the sense in which we now use it, so much as in the manner of a prophetic gift, even as other prophets had done before him. And that he might be kept pure for this work, from the first, the gift was promised from his mother's womb, i. e., from his birth. We have an intimation that infants from their very birth are capable, in some measure, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, under the Christian dispensation. Gal. i. 15; Ps. xxii. 9, 10.

16. *Children of Israel.* The descendants of Jacob, called also Israel. Gen. xxxii. 28. John was a prophet to the Jews only. He did not preach to the Gentiles. ¶ *Turn to the Lord their God.* Sins had separated the nation from the Lord, by breaking the covenant made with Him. Repentance and obedience were the means and acts of turning again to Him. To these John did persuade many by Divine grace.

17. *Shall go before him.* As a herald precedes a king. The Christ for whom they waited, was soon to come, and this child should anticipate His coming only by a little. The words here refer to Mal. iv. 5, 6, and imply that the *Him* of this verse is the Lord their God. ¶ *Spirit, &c.* See Matt. xi. 14. ¶ *Turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.* Malachi adds, "and the heart of the children to the fathers"—which is here changed. This language teaches that one end of John's mission was to effect reconciliation among his people, to preach "peace on earth," and by "works meet for repentance," bring all to a state of preparation for the presence of the Lord. St. Paul says: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. The angels announced "peace on earth, good will to men" (ch. ii. 14) as a characteristic of Christ's coming. In his mission, John was to effect this peace. In the account of his first preaching to the Jews, there are indications that all ranks and parties felt, for a time, an inclination to lay aside their differences, and unite to await the Messiah. Ch. iii. Pure religion will never flourish where contention and strife are. They must be put away, that we may receive its gracious influences. ¶ *And the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.* The angel may have used these words as a parallel to those of Malachi: "The heart of the children to the fathers;" for the children who are disobedient, are neither wise nor just. The wisdom of the just, is the true wisdom; such as the righteous fathers of the nation had manifested: or, it may signify the wisdom of the *Just One*, that is, of Christ, who is so described Acts iii. 14. ¶ *To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* Josephus declares, that John was "a good man, who instructed the Jews by the exercise of virtue, and by piety toward God, and righteousness or justice towards one another, to come to his baptism: and that hereupon there was a great concourse made unto him, the people being much delighted with his doctrine."—*Jos. Antiq.*, Bk. xviii. ch. 7. To warn the Jews, who were used to an ascetic life in their prophets and teachers, that Jesus was their Messiah, God sends before Him, a teacher and ascetic, who, imitating and equalling the rude and striking grandeur of Elijah of old, should arrest their attention, reform their manners, and prepare them for this new and Divine Teacher.

18. *Whereby shall I know this?* The Virgin in similar circumstances expressed a similar doubt, but was not punished for it. This was done because

17 And he shall go before him in[a] the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient ‖to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an[b] old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel answering, said unto him, I am[c] Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And behold thou shalt be [d]dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his ministra-

a Mal. 4. 5, 6. ‖ Or, *by*. *b* Gen. 17. 17. *c* Dan. 8. 16; & 9. 21. *d* Ezek. 24. 27.

Zacharias was a priest and should have believed, on the testimony of the angel, that which, though difficult, his own Scriptures taught him was not impossible. Gen. xviii. 10–14; Heb. xi. 11, 12. But the Virgin could rightly ask for information, when a fact was announced to which there was nothing similar in all the history of the human race. His dumbness was also useful as a sign to the Jews, and a clear proof of the miraculous origin of the future child.

19. *I am Gabriel.* A Jewish priest would know at once this name, from Dan. viii. 16, and ix. 21. He is represented as the chief Archangel, ministering to the infant Messiah. Inferior archangels superintended nations, as Michael the Jewish people (Dan. x. 21), while the individuals of lesser rank minister to the heirs of salvation singly. Heb. i. 14. The name Gabriel is made up of two Hebrew words, signifying the *man of God.* ¶ *That stand in the presence of God.* Therefore the supreme and most highly-favored of all the angelic throng. To stand in the presence of a monarch, is, to be his favorite, to know most intimately his will, and to be employed on the most honorable business. 1 Kings x. 8. Our high priest is said "now to appear in the presence of God for us," to intimate His power to intercede for and help us. If Gabriel meant, as it seems likely, to intimate that this was his peculiar privilege, then is he supreme of all created beings, and was rightly employed as the special minister of the Son of God. He announced this incarnation to Daniel, viii. 16. Again to Zacharias, and then to Mary. Verse 26. He was the leader of the band which appeard to the shepherds, and was sent to sustain the fainting Sufferer in the garden. Luke xxii. 43. He then, coming from the immediate presence of God, could not err in the message which he declared. ¶ *These glad tidings.* The birth of John and the approach of the Messiah.

20. *Shalt be dumb.* Theophylact, an ancient writer, declares that "the word in the Greek may also signify *deaf.* He well says, 'Because thou believest not, thou shalt be *deaf* and *shall not be able to speak.*' For most reasonably he suffered these two things: as disobedient, he incurs the penalty of deafness, as an objector, of silence."

21. *The people waited.* Beyond the usual time. It is probable that he was about leaving the sanctuary when the angel appeared. ¶ *Marvelled.* Were wondering and anxious. They felt

tion were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* ‖highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

‖ Or, *graciously accepted*, or, *much graced*.

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alarm about his absence, for they knew that it was an awful thing to minister before God. And it is likely that their mode of conducting their service was so regular and exact, that any variation was remarkable.

22. *Seen a vision.* They judged this to be the explanation of his delay, and then of his disturbed looks on issuing forth, and of his unusual silence. He was unable to dismiss them with the common benediction. ¶ *He beckoned unto them.* Made signs to inform them that something extraordinary had occurred, and to dismiss them to their homes. Prophecy had long been silent—the priesthood now becomes dumb, as a sign of the approaching end of the Levitical ordinances.

23. *The days of his ministration.* They were the days of the week of the course or lot of the priests of Abia. The priests during their term of service did not enter their own houses, but remained continually in the enclosures of the sacred hill. At the end of their weeks they returned home. Zacharias could not leave, though he had seen an angel; for the angel had not brought him permission to violate the duties of his office. ¶ *His own house.* He is supposed to have lived in the priestly city Hebron. See verse 39. This event is believed by the vast majority of Christians to have happened in the month of September; and the festival of the birth of John the Baptist is put for the June following.

24. *Hid herself.* This she is supposed to have done for purposes of modesty and constant devotion. She desired probably to await the certain signs of the facts; to thank God for His mercy to her, and to preserve herself from any contamination. The purity of a Nazarite was believed to be affected by the food and actions of his mother during this period. Judges xiii. 7–13, 14.

25. *My reproach.* The hopes of a Messiah to be born of a woman increased in the minds of the Jewish women the natural desire of children. Ps. cxiii. 9. They thought it peculiarly a reproach to be barren.

26. *In the sixth month.* Reckoning from the time of Elisabeth's conception. This was the month of March, our Lord being born in December. The commemoration of this act is assigned in the calendar to March 25th, and called the Festival of the Annunciation. ¶ *Nazareth.* See Matt. ii. 22.

27. *To a Virgin.* See Matt. i. 18, 19. ¶ *House of David.* The tribe of King David, his family and descendants. We read constantly of the house of Israel, of Levi, of Judah, &c., for the tribes descending from them.

28. *Hail.* A salutation of honor in Greek, answering to the Hebrew form *Peace be to thee.* Luke xxiv. 36. The angel seeks to encourage as well as honor her. ¶ *Highly favored.* Thou who hast found favor with God, as the angel himself interprets it. Verse 30. ¶ *Blessed art thou among women.* God

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And behold, thou shalt [c]conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the [b]throne of his father David.

33 And he shall reign over the house [c]of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and

a Is. 7. 14. *b* 2 Sam. 7. 11, 12; Is. 9. 7. *c* Dan. 6. 14; Mic. 4. 7.

in His wisdom had chosen this pious and lowly virgin to become the mother of the infant Jesus. Why He had chosen her above all others, is among the secret things of His own will. She was obedient, humble, and pious; but still, like others of the sinful descendants of Eve, an heir of our common fallen nature. To this high honor she came not by her own merit, or the angel would have stated it, but by the favor of God. And we may join in this congratulation, and lovingly reverence her who was the mother of our Lord. But we cannot bend the knee to her, or call on her in prayers, or in any way *worship* her, without sinning against our own souls, and offending God by idolatry. There is but one Mediator and High Priest for us, the Lord Jesus. And God will not suffer Divine worship to be paid to any creature.

29. *Troubled at his saying.* Not, as it seems, at his presence. She did not apparently fear him, so much as become perplexed at that which he said to her. How was all this to be to her, a lowly maiden of Nazareth? ¶ *Cast in her mind.* Cogitated or tried to explain it to herself. ¶ *What manner of salutation.* To what this strange way of speaking would come. She, at least, had no idea then of receiving homage from the *Hail Mary*, but thought it only a salutation.

32. *He shall be great.* Not so much shall be as *is.* But still, this greatness was future to her and other mortals. He who was then Son of God could not be greater in truth. But as the Saviour of sinners and King of saints, His glorious Majesty was to be made known, and His fame increase, until all the ancient prophecies concerning Him should be fulfilled. See Is. ix. 6, 7; xlv. 23. ¶ *Son of the Highest.* He says not Son of God merely, but calling Him by a name which looketh to His supreme and loftiest nature, he says the Highest; Him whose nature is sublime above all creatures; of His nature is He who is now to take human flesh. ¶ *The throne of His father David.* David was His ancestor by Mary. The throne is here used for that which is exercised upon it; His royal power. Jesus in His human nature was to receive the supremacy over all the true seed of Abraham—the true members of the kingdom promised to David; that is, over all saints. It was a spiritual kingdom, the Church, of which the kingdom of David was a type and prophecy.

33. *The house of Jacob.* The Jewish people. It is noticeable that the angel speaks of the Jews twice by the name of the third patriarch, and not as children of Abraham. Verse 16. So the Apostles speak of the Jews. Rom. ix. 7. Jacob was the father of the *nation*, or the twelve tribes, and saw their beginnings. The promise made to Abraham was more general, and applies more to the race. Gen. xxii. 18. ¶ *Of His kingdom there shall be no end.* Other kingdoms, like the four spoken of in Dan. vii. 14, should end, but this was never to cease from being a kingdom till He had surrendered the redeemed saints to His Father. 1 Cor. xv. 28; Heb. ii. 8, 9. The promise made to David could now be understood, that "his throne should be established for ever." 2 Sam. vii. 13–16; Ps. cxxxii. 11.

34. *How shall this be, &c.* A ques-

said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the [a]Son of God.

36 And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren:

37 [b]For with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-

a John 2. 34; Rom. 1. 4.

b Gen. 18. 14; Jer. 32. 17.

tion of simple wonder, not of vain curiosity or unbelief. There was every reason why she should ask it. Accordingly she was satisfied, not punished. We too, may rejoice that she asked, as the answer is a plain declaration of the Divinity of Christ.

35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.* See Matt. i. 18–20. ¶ *The power of the Highest.* God shall do this strange thing by a direct miracle, overshadowing and effecting it. It was requisite that He who offered a sacrifice for the sins of men, should be without sin Himself. This could be only in this manner, since all who are born naturally, are sinners by nature. Therefore we must perceive the harmony of this immaculate conception with the other articles of the creed. See Heb. vii. 26, 27. ¶ *That holy thing.* That sinless Child about to be born of thee. ¶ *Shall be called the Son of God.* It was so called among men, by reason of this its original. Men are men by birth from others. But Jesus knew no such father. Now from His Father, equally as from His mother, He must receive the same nature. Of the virgin He received human flesh. Of the Holy Ghost and God the Father He necessarily received the Divine substance, and was therefore called, or was known to be, the Son of God.

36, 37. *Behold thy cousin Elisabeth.* To assure the mind of the virgin, and to convince her that nothing was impossible, because simply unusual, the case of her relative is mentioned. It was as certainly miraculous that one event should happen as the other. She could overcome any temptation to doubt which might arise, by informing herself of the facts in the case of her cousin.

38. *Behold the handmaid of the Lord.* She thus expresses her entire submission to the will of God, and her faith in the message of the angel. She was the handmaid, that is, the servant of the Lord, and felt, therefore, that she owed entire obedience to whatsoever might be commanded by Him. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Sam. xv. 22.

39. *And Mary arose.* That is, she at once prepared to go, as one who conceives a resolution, and rises from a seat to put it in execution. ¶ *The hill-country.* The region of the tribe of Judah, lying south of Jerusalem, is rough and hilly for many miles. ¶ *City of Juda.* Many surmises are ventured concerning this place. Some suggest Jerusalem; others a new reading, making it Joutta. It is altogether probable that it was *Hebron*, which was one of the cities given to the priests by Joshua (Josh. xxi. 11–13), and was expressly described as being in the hill-country. Josh. xi. 21; xv. 48–54. The only question is, why the writer has omitted the name.

41. *Was filled with the Holy Ghost.* Elisabeth was divinely inspired to understand the cause of the sudden motion mentioned, and, as a pious and just woman, expressed her joy at the great favor which was done to her youthful kinswoman, and prophesied concerning her. It is mentioned that Mary only saluted her, and had as yet told her nothing. She learned it, therefore, from God.

country with haste, into [a] a city of Juda,

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voice and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence *is* this to me,

[a] Josh. 21. 11.

that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed *is* she [‡] that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the

[‡] Or, *which believed that there.*

42. *Blessed art thou among women.* She uses the very words of the angel. How blessed is she whom saints and angels call blessed! Blessed in the privilege of bearing Him who took upon Him to deliver man; blessed, that she was humble and faithful in all things.

43. *And whence is this to me?* The pious elder among the Jews was wont to receive honor. Elisabeth was very old; Mary very young. It was out of the course of nature and custom for the elder to pay reverence to the younger. Her humility therefore was by grace, and a proof of her faith, that Mary was to be the mother of Christ. ¶ *Mother of my Lord.* Many and sturdy controversies have arisen concerning these words in the Christian Church. We are safe to receive from them the belief, that Mary was the mother of the human nature of the Lord, which being perfect in itself was intimately joined to the one Person Christ, God and man; and so as to this lower nature, she can properly be called the mother of the Lord. His Divine nature can allow no such idea, for it was before all worlds, eternal and perfect, "without father and without mother." Heb. vii. 11.

45. *Blessed is she that believed.* Not only in the fact of her faith, but because of the fruit of it. Had Mary disbelieved or refused to walk in the laws of God as a modest and pious maiden, this grace had passed over her to another. There has been a sad history of degeneration in the Church, that has perverted this address of Elisabeth. Very early there arose a spirit of undue reverence towards the Virgin Mary, which increased into open idolatry. At present the church of Rome is apparently infatuated, to exalt the homage to her, even above the service due to the Son of God. The churches and shrines to the Virgin in Romish countries are crowded with eager worshippers, while those consecrated to her Son stand vacant. Immense sums are spent in jewels and gewgaws to deck dolls called by her name, and every year increases the false list of the miracles of these wooden toys. It demands the investigation of the acute, whether this lavish religiousness toward a woman, has not the marks of a reaction against the forced celibacy of Rome; these fancies arising mostly from institutions devoted to that practice. The reader should examine well all that can properly be concluded from this passage, that he may avoid the seducing arts of the wicked. The Protestant Church sternly forbids such idolatry. The Prayer Book has two feast days commemorating these events, one of which uses the foregoing passage as its Gospel. But the prayers for those days are scrupulously worded, and avoid

low [a]estate of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name.

50 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

[a] 1 Sam. 1. 11.

any mention of her name. We too call her blessed, and rejoice to recognize her purity, humility, faith and piety; but we esteem her as a woman, an heir of human frailty, and like all others, needing justification and salvation by Christ. See the Festivals of Purification (Feb. 2) and Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (March 25).

46. *My soul doth magnify the Lord. To magnify*, in respect to God, is to praise Him with the whole heart, to worship Him as Supreme. See Ps. xxxiv. 3. Mary's hymn of praise is very like that of Hannah. 1 Sam. ii. 1–10. It began in the Latin translation with the word *magnificat*, and is yet often so called. It is used in the evening service of the English Church. It is omitted in the American Prayer Book, and its place filled by four verses of the 92d Psalm: another indication that the spirit of our Church is opposed to Mariolatry.

47. *In God my Saviour.* She confesses her need of a Saviour. Mary manifests in this Divine song that she is filled with the Holy Ghost. God by His Son to be born of her, was the Saviour of the human race. Heb. x. 5, 10. To rejoice in God is to take delight in discovering His plans of mercy to us and by us. To her He was a Saviour, and by her, He was to be born who was to save all men.

48. *The low estate of His handmaiden.* Mary though of royal descent was poor and unknown. There was nothing to have led the eyes of men towards her. But as the prophet Samuel said of her ancestor David: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 70. The Lord had overlooked the proud and wealthy families of her nation, and not despised her poverty, but had chosen her to become the mother of the Great King. God had chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty, and to confirm the faith of the Christian in His mercy and wisdom. 1 Cor. i. 27; Psalm cxxxviii. 6. ¶ *From henceforth.* From the time when this event shall become known, for which Elisabeth had already called her blessed. ¶ *All generations.* All ages, and men to the end of time. ¶ *Call me blessed.* Should esteem her so and make mention of her as highly favored by the Almighty, in being chosen to fulfil an ancient prophecy. Is. vii. 14. All Christians who partake of the fruits of her faith, will join to pay her that honor which is her due. To invoke her name, call her Queen of Heaven, chant Aves to her, or kneel at images in her name and other foolish rites, are things that we may not do.

49. *He that is mighty.* God, the Almighty. ¶ *Hath done great things.* Hath performed things beyond expectation; things which are wonderful and amazing. ¶ *And holy is His name.* Therefore is He to be feared and worshipped. The name of God is often used in Scripture, for His revealed character and attributes. To pronounce it holy is a pious ascription to Him, from one, who seeing some act of His power or mercy, feels awed in His presence. The prophets use the same style. Ps. cxvi. 47; Is. lvii. 15; Ezek. xxxix. 7. The name *Jehovah* was derived at first from that which could be known of God. See Ex. iii. 13–14, and vi. 3.

50. *His mercy.* The merciful kindness of God has been shown in two ways, to which these words may apply. 1. In exalting humble and pious persons, as Abraham, Hannah, David and others, to a conspicuous place in His kingdom. He thus often condescended to the lowly, and exalted them to high places. Or 2. In His forgiving sins and dealing gently with the infirmities of His servants, and giving them bless-

51 He hath [a]shewed strength with his arm; [b]he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

a Is. 51. 9. *b* Ps. 33, 10.

52 He hath[c] put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled[d] the hungry

c 1 Sam. 2. 6. *d* Ps. 34. 10.

ings to which they felt that they had no claim. ¶ *Is on them.* Or is manifested towards them, protects and guides them, so that they are made distinguished examples of it and the graces that result from it. ¶ *That fear Him.* Upon righteous and pious men. Every Christian *must* fear God, or he can have only an imperfect idea of His majesty. Fear and love beget obedience and trust in Him. ¶ *From generation to generation.* In every age of the past the Scripture shows that the beneficence of God has been shown to His worshippers. It was no chance, arbitrary mode of dealing with them, but was His constant and unchangeable character. See James i. 17. It is noticeable that in the Scripture history the pious almost invariably confirmed their faith, in times of joy or sorrow, by a contemplation of the piety and blessings of the saints who lived before them. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

51. *Hath showed strength.* One Hebrew name of God signifies *the strong One.* He was often celebrated as One who wrought wonders of deliverance. Ps. cxviii. 15, 16. Mary having praised His mercy towards His servants, now turns to one exhibition of it; His protection of them from the violence of their enemies. Thus he preserved Lot from the Sodomites and their destruction; Abram from Abimelech; Jacob from Esau; Joseph from his brethren; David from Saul, and others. Here "Grotius notes that God's great power is represented by His finger, His greater by His hand, His greatest by His arm. The production of the lice was 'by the finger of God.' Ex. viii. 19. His other miracles in Egypt were wrought 'by His hand.' Ex. iii. 20. The destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, 'by His arm.' Ex. xv. 6. The following words seem to be taken from the song of Hannah. 1 Sam. ii. 4–6."—*Dr. Whitby.* ¶ *Hath scattered the proud.* Opposed to His showing mercy to the humble, and a necessary consequence of it. This seems not to apply to the then present circumstances of the virgin; but by inspiration she felt this connection, and rejoiced that He who was so lowly born could believe, that God would subdue all enemies before Him. ¶ *In the imaginings of their hearts.* Proud, hostile men, trusting to their plans of enmity. The words refer rather to the plans and intentions formed by minds angry with pride and passion. Prov. vi. 18; 2 Cor. x. 5. In the 2d Psalm David foretold that the kings and rulers of the people should scornfully take counsel together against the Lord and against His Messiah. And the Christians refer to the victory of "the Holy Child Jesus" over them on the escape of Peter and John from the Jewish rulers. Acts iv. 25–30.

52. *Hath put down the mighty.* Ungodly kings and rulers; those mighty in the strength of this world. How fondly would a pious Jewish maiden turn to the numerous instances of such deliverance, to encourage her heart for the future of her expected child, who was to overcome unusual obstacles in His life. Is. xi. 12–14. ¶ *Exalted them.* Raised up to a lofty and successful course those who trusted in Him. James i. 9. ¶ *Low degree.* Those born of humble and poor parents. Mary was probably imagining, as the disciples did, until illuminated by the Pentecostal light, that Jesus was to reign on the earth as a sovereign, until all the glorious prophecies of her Jewish ancestors were fulfilled, and all nations were subdued unto Him. She recalls, therefore, the records of those men who had been called to great power from a very obscure origin; as Joseph from a dungeon to be prime minister of Pharaoh; Saul from being a herds-

with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, [a]in remembrance of *his* mercy;

a Jer. 31. 3. 20.

55 [b]As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed, for ever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

b Ps. 132. 11; Gen. 17. 19.

man, and David from a shepherd's life, to become kings of Israel; Daniel from being a slave to the honors of three courts, with numerous others. But the words were still more emphatic than she conceived. For Jesus was to receive a kingdom and be exalted until He shall put down all enemies and all principalities in heaven and earth to a willing obedience to Him. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. The believer may ponder the law of this spiritual kingdom, that God looks not to the human state of those whom He chooses for great usefulness in His Church, but to their faith and docility. Rev. v. 10.

53. *The hungry with good things.* Thus did He feed Israel forty years with bread from heaven, and daily the poor who looked unto Him. Men go by another rule. They do good to those who can repay them. Grace teaches them to give and lend expecting nothing again. ¶ *The rich hath He sent empty away.* The Jews devoutly believed that God "maketh poor and maketh rich," and so sang Hannah centuries before Mary. 1 Sam. ii. 7. They recognized the folly of such as trusted in uncertain riches, and neglected God. For the Divine Providence mercifully inscribes this same lesson on every page of the world's history, that men may take warning and not lose their souls by an overweening confidence in worldly advantages. Prov. xi. 28; xxiii. 5. These things are given us that we may wisely use them and be faithful in the stewardship of them. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

54. *Hath holpen.* Hath assisted or given help to. The word in Greek means, to take a prostrate man by the hands to help him up. And this God had done to the Jewish nation, which had often been in the sad condition of one sick and beaten down. The prophets introduced this style, and Isaiah speaks of the Jews as of a sick man. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, &c." Is. i. 5, 6. All along for ages God had shown this mercy to them, in forgiving their backslidings, and saving them from the consequences of them. ¶ *His servant Israel.* The chosen people, descended from Jacob or Israel ¶ *In remembrance of His mercy.* Remembering the mercy and benefits which He had promised to the patriarchs, He was now about to show His mindfulness of His promises in a grander and richer blessing to these same Jews.

55. *As He spake to our fathers.* As He promised to bless their children. The Divine favor was manifested particularly to Abraham, as one who was to be the example of faithful obedience, and not only the federal head, of the nation derived from him, but also the father and example of all faithful followers of God for ever. Great and precious promises were made to him. ¶ *To his seed.* To Isaac. But she mentions not his name, for the promise was so worded as to have one fulfillment in him, but also to pass over him to all the faithful, and especially to foreshadow Christ. Gen. xxi. 12; Gal. iii. 16. Because Christ was yet to come from them, God had preserved the Jewish nation. When that event came to pass, they were scattered. ¶ *For ever.* This word may properly be joined to the preceding verse. God had remembered His mercy, i. e. His promises in all the past history of the Jews. The other words are then a parenthesis. Or it may be read as it stands; for that promise made to the seed of Abraham, to the Messiah and His spiritual children, can be narrowed by no age of

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on [a]the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not *so;* but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened

a Gen. 17. 12; Lev. 12. 3.

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time. It reaches down to the end of time, and passes beyond it to all eternity. Jesus shall never lack believers, nor His people everlasting blessedness.

57. *She brought forth a son.* The nativity of John the Baptist occurred June 24, about six months before Christmas, or the birth of Jesus. He is the *only* saint whose birth is celebrated. Other saints have borne witness to Christ by their deaths, and entered into the rest of the martyrs. He turned men's eyes to Christ by his birth, and was, as St. Chrysostom says, "a preacher, a worker of miracles from the very womb." "Hence it is," says St. Augustine, "that the Church goes out of her usual method and pays a particular respect to the first setting out of this wonderful forerunner." It is an interesting tradition, that the fame of this birth excited the jealousy of Herod, so that he sought his life, at the same time that he slew the infants of Bethlehem: that Zacharias was killed in the temple for refusing to deliver up his son, and that Elisabeth fled with her infant into the wilderness for safety, and there began with him that solitary life, which he afterwards continued from choice until the days of his ministry. The Church could not so properly celebrate the death of John, for though he died a witness for the truth of the Levitical law, yet he was not so properly a martyr for Christ as the other later disciples. And again, the Scripture has celebrated his birth as a season of great joy, the turning point between the old Covenant and the new.

59. *On the eighth day.* The day required by the law. Gen. xxi. 4; Lev. xii. 2, 3. No place was prescribed for the rite, which was performed by any friend of the parties. ¶ *And they called his name Zacharias.* The name was given at the time of circumcision, because God had changed the names of Abram and Sarai at the time of the institution of the rite (Gen. xvii.), and Abraham had named Isaac on a similar occasion. They called, i. e. they were about to call him so.

60. *Shall be called John.* This she might have learned from the father by writing. But it seems that the mother's power in the case was limited, and they refer to the father.

61. *There is none of thy kindred, &c.* This objection used by the relatives would imply that it was usual to keep names within certain limits. They seem to have been unwilling to go out of the family for a name without some reason.

62. *They made signs.* Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb, or they could have told him their doubt in words, and received his assent by signs. But as the infirmity had been put upon him for a sign, it was to be taken off only in a marked manner, as he himself was in the act of naming his child.

63. *He asked.* Of course by signs. ¶ *A writing table.* Or a tablet. A

immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these ‖sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

‖ Or, *things*.

66 And all they that heard *them*, laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

small plane surface of board or metal smeared with wax, on which the ancients made marks with a sharp-pointed pen or stylus of metal. We are to remember that they then knew nothing of the modern conveniences of writing. ¶ *His name is John.* His name *is*, not *shall be called*, as his mother had said. On this St. Ambrose well notes: "We give no name to him who has received his name from God."

64. *They marvelled all.* He had been dumb for many months. They had heard rumors of the events at the temple the preceding year. Now he gives his child an unusual name, gives it not as of himself, but as if he had been directed by another, and for the first time breaks his long silence. The Jews were given to astrology, and were superstitious concerning events occurring at the birth and infancy of their children. Now that these signs are manifested, they are filled with wondering surmises.

65. *Were noised abroad.* This is mentioned as a fact which could be ascertained, and which manifested that the life of John had been remarkable from the first. It was the design of Providence to manifest him in this wonderful manner, that he might afterwards challenge attention as *a genuine prophet* of the Lord. Men may deceive others with deceit and subtlety, but infants have no such power. They who saw these things would remember them when John came preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, nor does it seem that his mission as a real prophet was ever questioned by the people. John v. 35.

66. *The hand of the Lord was with him.* By this we are to understand that there were certain manifestations of the Divine favor towards the child, probably in preserving him from danger; events which would be noticed by observers living in Hebron, but which the writer has not seen fit to record. Many absurd legends were propagated in the early ages of the Church concerning the period which intervenes between the births of John and the Saviour, and their public ministry, but we may safely reject them. Had the inspired writers seen fit, they could have given them to us.

67. *Filled with the Holy Ghost.* He was inspired by the Holy Spirit for this one occasion, to compose the following sacred hymn. ¶ *And prophesied.* Or composed this hymn in the prophetic style. The Hebrew word, which describes the act of prophesying has a very peculiar meaning. It signifies to speak under a Divine influence, whether of the future or past, or in reproving the wicked, or describing the attributes or acts of God in an exalted style. 1 Sam. x. 5, 6; 1 Kings xviii. 29. As their prophets, when under the influence of inspiration, were visibly seized upon by a higher power and very much agitated, the same word describes the sad condition of Saul in his wild fits of jealous despair. 1 Sam. xviii. 10. Zacharias may have delivered this hymn immediately after receiving again the power of speech, or very soon afterwards. It contains a thanksgiving to God for the great mercies which were then to come upon his race. Under the name *Benedictus*, a part of it is used in the Morning service.

68. *Blessed.* See Matt. v. 3, note. ¶ *Hath visited.* That is, has come near to them with purposes of mercy. There could be no more certain token

68 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an [a]horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David:

a Ps. 132. 17.

70 As he [b]spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

b Jer. 23. 5; & 30. 9.

of the Divine mercy to the Jews than His sending prophets to them. By the prophets He spake to them, warned, blessed, and guided them, and so might be said to visit them in person. Ruth i. 6; Ps. lxxx. 14. God had very often visited His people in times of adversity to relieve them from temporal evils, now He comes down to release them from a sorer bondage. ¶ *And redeemed.* Has provided a redemption, a means by which to escape from evils. Zacharias would use the word as a pious Jew, and by it he signified the deliverance from sin which was to be effected, doubtless expecting that a temporal freedom from all enemies would attend it. The mode of saving the Israelites from Egypt by the hand of Moses, was a type of this spiritual redemption. Then God freed them, a race of slaves, helpless and pusillanimous, and led them through the sea and desert by evident miracles. Now He rescues a soul from spiritual bondage, and works in it by grace, sanctifies, guides, and saves it after a heavenly manner. He redeems His people when He frees them from the power and guilt, and so from the consequences of their sins. We are not to search into the reasons why God did this, and the manner in which He works in the counsels of His own will. Enough for us that spiritual redemption is revealed in Scripture.

69. *And hath raised up a horn.* The Prayer Book has it a *mighty salvation*, giving the meaning and not the exact words. The great strength and defence of many beasts lie in their horns. Especially is this true of the cattle with which the Jews were most familiar, and the horn would become in their minds a symbol of strength. Moses compared Joseph to a young bullock, and says, "His horns are like the horns of unicorns." Deut. xxxiii. 17. The words used by Zacharias occur in Psalm xviii. 2, and mean that God is a great defence and safety. The horn was also a symbol of royal power, which sense has place here (Ps. cxxxii. 17; Dan. vii. 7, 8), as that kingdom was now to be set up by Christ, which would be a great salvation to all redeemed sinners. ¶ *In the house.* In the family of the descendants of King David this Saviour and kingdom would now appear.

70. *By His holy prophets.* God had promised by some of the prophets that Christ should be born of the family of David; but by them all that He should be a Saviour of His people. For all the rites and customs of the Jews, as well as their prophecies, had their fulfilment in Christ. ¶ *Since the world began.* From Adam himself to whom the first promise was made (Gen. iii. 15); or from the earliest times in which prophecies were made concerning Christ.

71. *Saved from our enemies.* Zacharias, as a Jew, may have thought chiefly of the Romans and other Gentiles, the enemies of his country; but his words deserve a more spiritual meaning, of salvation from ghostly enemies. Those foes to men, are sins, worldly temptations and evil spirits, against whom, and not against flesh and blood, the Apostle warns us, that we are to contend. Eph. vi. 12. ¶ *The hand.* From the power.

72. *To perform the mercy.* To fulfil the promises, to do the things which He had mercifully foretold that He would do. Many of the promises made to the holy men of old seemed to receive a fulfilment in temporal advantages; as for instance, the Jews imagined that they were the only seed prom-

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The [a]oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness [b]and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, [c]child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest,

a Gen. 12. 3; & 17. 4; & 22. 16, 17.

b Jer. 32. 39, 40. *c* Mal. 3. 1; & 4, 5.

ised to Abraham. Scripture teaches us, however, that these were only partial fulfilments—the full answer was to be sought in spiritual blessings and in a spiritual seed. These were now to appear. ¶ *To remember His holy covenant.* To prove to the world that He remembered it. The Omniscient could never forget, nor be slack concerning His promises. Men might forget or pervert them. But now God was to rescue them from all error, and to fulfil to the utmost all that He had graciously promised. A covenant had been made with Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses, and on condition of obedience on their part, God had graciously bound Himself to certain conditions. This covenant was holy, and could not be broken by Him. He was mindful of His pledge, and now redeemed it.

73. *The oath.* He had mentioned the covenant and now explains it by this particular oath made to Abraham. It is found in Gen. xxii. 16, 17. See St. Paul's comments upon it. Heb. vi. 13, 14. That promise was important; because God bound Himself to the promise, in consideration of the obedidience already offered to Him by Abraham. In other cases the covenant seemed to bear on both parties, and one party had broken it by sin. In this oath there was no such contingency.

74. *Might serve Him.* The Jews could not continue their public worship, when forbidden by a conquering enemy. It had often been disturbed by the Gentiles. Ps. cxxxvii. 1. They looked to the Messiah's coming, as a time of peace when they should never again be disturbed in their service. But the promise looked deeper than this, to the state of the Christian soul, freed from the power of sin and Satan, and able to serve God acceptably.

75. *In holiness and righteousness.* These two words are to be carefully distinguished. *Holiness* is piety and pureness of heart towards God. Righteousness is right-ness or integrity towards the law. The one is seen in its perfection by Him only who sees the heart; the other must be more or less visible to men. The one looks to God as a Spirit, a Father to be loved and imitated; the other to His law and judgment, which are to be feared and obeyed. The Pharisees had a righteousness (Rom. x. 3; Matt. v. 20), though very partial and defective, still a kind of obedience to the law. But we hear no mention made of any holiness belonging to them. The true Christian must excel in both, that he may serve God in spirit (holiness) and in truth (righteousness). John iv. 24. ¶ *All the days of our life.* All the life long. Compare the beautiful words of David, Psalms xxiii. 6, and xxvii. 4, and of the pious mother of Lemuel, Prov. xxxi. 12. Blessings are the richer for such life-long continuance.

76. *And thou, child.* There is a touching beauty in this sudden turn to address his child. His mind raised in prophetic rapture beholds the lovely image of the coming state of peace and holiness enduring for ever; and then as a priest and father he exults that his little infant is to usher it in. ¶ *Prophet of the Highest.* John is called prophet of the Highest, i. e., the Supreme Being, and said to go before the face of the Lord. But John was the prophet of, and went before Christ. Therefore Christ is "the Highest," and "the Lord." John, in all his acts and preach-

for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, ‖by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the ‖tender mercy of our God; whereby the ‖day-spring ‴from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

¶ Or, *for*. ‖ Or, *bowels of mercy*. ‖ Or, *sun-rising*, or *branch*.

a Zech. 3. 8; Is. 11. 1; Mal. 4. 2; Num. 24. 17.

ing, announced the instant approach of Christ, and has been declared by Jesus the greatest of those born of women, and more than a prophet. ¶ *To prepare His way.* See Is. xl. 3, and note on Matt. iii. 3.

77. *To give knowledge of salvation.* To recall the Jews from their foolish superstitions and ignorance, to the true worship and obedience of God. John gave them news of a Saviour, and of course in Him of salvation. ¶ *By (or for) the remission of their sins.* John entered on his office with the preaching of *repentance* to prepare for the Messianic kingdom, with *confession of sins*, and evidence of *fruits meet for repentance*, and *baptism unto repentance for their remission.* See Matt. iii. In all which he took no other power on himself than to be the voice of a herald, and to *remit* all to Christ for final pardon. For Christ alone by His Divine supremacy could forgive sins. Luke v. 21, 24. In forgiveness of sins lies the glory and preciousness of the Christian religion, which, by a sublime series of demonstrations, reaching through all times and ages, teaches us to believe and rejoice in the knowledge that God can be "*just*, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." See Rom. iii. 25, 26.

78. *The dayspring.* The light seen in the east at the dawning of day. Christ was to be the light of the world in all spiritual and celestial knowledge. See Is. lx. 1, 2. John the Baptist was the morning star to announce the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, which should scatter the darkness of ignorance and manifest the glorious perfectness of the finished plan of redemption. It was the dayspring from *on high*, for Christ came down from heaven.

79. *To give light.* See note, Matt. iv. 16. ¶ *To guide our feet.* To guide them into the ways of moral truth and piety. Ps. cxix. 105. The Jews were then degenerate, superstitious, ignorant and self-willed. God was about to recall them, to shed light into the darkness, and to lead them to the ways of peace and safety. He does this still by His grace. He sends light into souls which are dark; shows them the way of salvation, excites their fears, calls out their affections, strengthens their resolutions, and leads them in mercy to a complete escape from destruction. Alas, that so many pass by the narrow way of peace, and choose to follow on with the crowd of sinners in the broad road which has no peace here, and only destruction beyond.

80. *Waxed strong. Increased* in moral and mental gifts, as he grew up through childhood, youth and early manhood. St. Luke now takes leave of John, until thirty years have passed over him; and these words apply properly to that whole season. ¶ *In spirit.* In mind and grace, as well as in body. His life corresponded to the early signs already mentioned. ¶ *In the deserts.* In places apart from towns and cities. The tradition is that Elisabeth fled with him from Herod, into the wilderness of Maon and Ziph, near Hebron. But it seems certain from this, that he passed most of his life in the secret fastnesses of the woods and mountains of Judah,

CHAPTER II.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2 (*And* this taxing was first

‖ Or, *enrolled.*

in the manner of a hermit, in prayer, meditation and abstinence, going probably to Jerusalem privately at the yearly feasts. ¶ *Until the day of his showing unto Israel.* Till the time that he entered publicly upon his duties as a prophet, being then about thirty years of age. See Matt. iii. 1. How poor and mean seems the ambition of many young men, who rush forward into places of responsibility, for which their very youth unfits them, compared with the patience and willing silence of John, until the appointed signal came from God. Miracles and prophecies had ushered him into life, but the largest part of that life he spends in the desert, waiting God's time. Nothing more is related by the Evangelists of the parents of John. They were very old, and probably soon passed off the scene of life. Tradition mentions that Zacharias was killed by Herod in the temple, for refusing to deliver up his son, and that Elisabeth died in the wilderness soon after her flight.

CHAPTER II.

1. *In those days.* About that time. The decree would be issued first at Rome, and require some time to reach the distant parts of the empire. It was promulgated in Syria just before the birth of Jesus, and accounts for the *place* of His birth, according to what follows. ¶ *A decree.* An imperial order. ¶ *From Cesar Augustus.* Emperor of Rome. After the murder of his uncle Julius Cesar, by Brutus and others, Augustus, with Anthony and Lepidus, waged war against the conspirators. In time, he became sole monarch, and overcame all his enemies, at home and abroad. The temple of Janus was shut, in token of universal peace. In order to govern his wide dominions with greater ease, he ordered the enrolment of all the citizens in each nation and tribe. Thus a pagan ruler, who had no other object in this decree, than to strengthen his own government, is made the instrument of fulfilling prophecies. ¶ *All the world.* Of course the known world. And as the Roman empire now embraced the largest part of that which was in any way civilized, it proudly claimed this style. The decree, of course, included the Roman empire only, and Judea as a small portion of it. Some would confine the words to Judea, but with insufficient reason; for 1. The decree was passed because, not Judea alone, but all the world was at peace. It is believed to mark the fact that the sovereignty had at length passed from the Jews to another people, for they were enrolled in this census as an integral part of the Roman empire. Both circumstances agree properly with the wider use of the words. 2. The word *world*, is used fifteen times in the New Testament, and it cannot be shown that in any case, it is confined to Palestine. 3. While the Old Testament writers used it of large empires, as Babylon (Is. xiv. 17–26), it has not been applied to small regions of country, such as Judea. 4. Early writers referred unbelievers to the decree of enrollment of the empire by Augustus, as still to be found in the public archives. St. Chrysostom says: "It is lawful for any one who wishes to know accurately, to search the ancient records publicly deposited in Rome, and there to learn the time of that enrolment." 5. It is referred to as a well-known historical event, by a Greek (St. Luke) to a Gentile friend residing at a distance from Palestine. He would not be apt, even if a Jew could do it, to refer by such a word, to an event confined to Judea and of course known to very few besides the persons concerned. A decree from a Roman emperor to all the world, might mean to all the empire, but never to a mere fraction of it. ¶ *Should be taxed*, or (margin) *enrolled.* That their names

made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

should be registered, with a view to a general tax. We term such a registration a *census*. This was a mighty undertaking for that age of the world, and it doubtless took several years to complete it. During this time, other wars might arise, and the design be for a time delayed. It is sufficient for us now to know, that such a decree was made, and went into effect in Judea at the time mentioned in the text.

2. *This taxing was first made, &c.* Not many verses of Scripture have occasioned greater display of "learned questions," than this. Many ingenious explanations have been offered, and it has been proposed to change the text here and there to suit them, until, if we should adopt them, we would have neither text nor opinion. Without wearying the reader with these, it seems best to state the difficulty with one mode of removing it, and to add what seems the best principle of meeting all such difficulties as arise purely from our *necessary ignorance*. The difficulty is, that it would appear from other uninspired records, that Cyrenius or Quirinus here mentioned, was not governor of Judea until twelve years *after the birth* of Christ, which fact, if so, is destructive of the present translation, which says it was "first made *when* Cyrenius was governor." Now as St. Luke mentions the name of Cyrenius, in order to fix the exact date of the birth of Christ, which would be in vain if he was not in some manner governor at the time, and as the learned seem to agree that the words of St. Luke are authentic, i. e. have not been altered; it is the more consistent solution to believe that the mistake is on the other side, and that errors have crept into the other accounts, and not into the record of the inspired writer. This solution has no greater difficulties than those which go to discredit St. Luke. All are based on conjectures. This Gospel was seen and read of all men in that day, and assaulted by enemies and cavillers on every hand; yet none found fault with it for any such reason. We in this age, being profoundly ignorant, and unfitted to do more than *conjecture*, may safely take the text as we find it. Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, defied the Gentiles to consult the records at Rome, concerning this taxing. Tertullian is supposed to have cited certain words from the census itself, as still existing at Rome. Would such a mistake as an error of twelve years in the birth of Christ have been passed by? And how little do we now know of it! The principle adopted by the learned and pious Dr. Jarvis, on a similar subject, after all his learning, was this: "Instead of these ingenious conjectures, by which *the ground of all truth is made to crumble beneath our feet*, it is better for us at once to go back to the devout simplicity and historic faith, which, long before the existence of ignorant legends and impudent interpolations, characterized the purest ages of Christianity."

3. *To his own city.* The Romans, in order to prevent insurrections, had adopted this custom, even in Italy, to prevent crowds gathering at Rome. It was much more necessary among a people as turbulent as the Jews. It was overruled by God to establish the descent of Jesus from David, and to fulfil the ancient prophecy of Micah, v. 2.

4. *City of David.* Bethlehem, where David was born and bred. See note, Matt. ii. 1. ¶ *Of the house and lineage.* Of that family and tribe. They went to the tribe of Benjamin, and the city of David. Mary was obliged to accompany him, as it was her own city. The villages Nazareth and Bethlehem were about sixty miles apart, and it was in the winter season. No woman in her situation would have been conveyed such a distance, unless it had been absolutely necessary. She had also to be enrolled, and if we may credit Tertullian, she was enrolled thus "*Mary, from whom Christ was born.*"

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the [c]city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her

a John 7. 42.

7. *Her first-born son.* We believe that Mary had no other children. See notes, Matt. i. 24. It is a question, however, which each will decide rather by his own general views of propriety in sacred things. The first child was called first-born, by the Jews, whether an only child or otherwise. The great majority of the Christian world has repudiated the notion that other children were born to Mary. ¶ *She wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes.* She did for Him in her poverty and neglected state, the duties usually performed by others. ¶ *Laid Him in a manger.* The word among us signifies a box or trough, wherein the food of cattle is put. The Eastern nations have sometimes rough stone-

first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

‖ Or, *night-watches.*

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping ‖watch over their flock by night.

troughs for this purpose. The original word refers rather to the whole place, as we say, a stable; some neglected place given up to cattle. Justin Martyr and others state that it was a cave in a rock near the village. Origen and Eusebius declare it to have been still seen in their day: and at the present time the place is shown, with every circumstance agreeing with ancient history. There need be no doubt of the correctness of the modern site. The original church built by St Helena over it still exists. Superstition may err in particulars, but unbelief as surely errs in rudely rejecting all reverence for the sacred places of the Holy Land. ¶ *In the inn.* Caravansaries in the East are built in every town, and often near fountains for the convenience of travellers. They are unlike our inns. They are made about a square or court, often with a fountain in the centre, of one, sometimes two stories, and furnished with places for cooking and sleeping. Each traveller accommodates himself as he can, until the place is full. Every one carries his own provisions and bedding, and expects to find it simply a refuge from the weather and robbers. The inn was filled by the unusual concourse at this time, and was an unfit place for Mary. Joseph sought a spot more retired, and could find none better than a stable. We may wonder at the condescension of the Lord of glory, that He should choose such a refuge as His first presence-chamber on this earth.

8. *The same country.* In the valleys around the village of Bethlehem. ¶ *Shepherds.* On these same plains over which Abraham had passed, and where David had followed the sheepfolds, there were others doing the same on this night. ¶ *Abiding in the fields.* The climate was mild, and the flocks were allowed to range far and wide. Men were employed to guard them from wild beasts and thieves. From this circumstance, some modern writers have invented an absurd objection to the common opinion of our Lord's nativity occurring on the twenty-fifth of December; neglecting entirely the body of evidence, which establishes the day, by respectable arguments. They would offer as a conclusive argument, that which every winters' night sees refuted. The minimum of cold in Jerusalem, six miles from Bethlehem, is 47°, *which is above the common frost point.* Bethlehem is elevated only 300 feet above Jerusalem—the plains around it are probably many feet lower than the town. There are short storms of ice and snow every winter, during which men and animals suffer; but for most of the season there can be no healthier occupation for men. St. Jerome, who lived many years as a monk in Bethlehem, declares the winters to be milder than at Rome. Dr. Russell states that at Aleppo the climate permits many to pass the winter without fires. Calmet fixes the mean temperature of December at 46°, and cites authorities to show that grain is sown; the grass and herbs grow, and that the Arabs drive their flocks down from the mountains to the plains, after the rains. On the same latitude in Carolina and at an equal elevation, men and sheep are constantly exposed on wintry nights, without hardship. In England, cold as it is, the sheep, as Casaubon stated, were kept out during the winter. It is with arguments as false as this that men arm themselves against the consentient evidence of antiquity, which has marked the 25th of December as the nativity of our Saviour.

9. *The glory of the Lord.* A glorious splendor, such as was wont to mark the presence of the Lord. Light was a symbol of God's presence in the Shechinah; in the glory that came down at times upon the tabernacle, which led

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be [a]to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ [b]the Lord.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the [c]heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the [d]highest, and on earth [e]peace, [f]good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the

a Gen. 12. 3; Col. 1. 23. *b* Acts 2. 36; & 10. 36. *c* Gen. 28. 12; & 32. 1, 2; Dan. 7. 10. *d* Eph. 3. 10, 21. *e* Rom. 5. 1; Eph. 2. 17; Col. 1. 20. *f* John 3. 16; 2 Thes. 2. 16.

the Israelites; which shone around Jesus when He was transfigured; and struck Saul to the earth at his conversion. Such a glory, clear, soft, bright, auroral as from a higher sphere, now manifested the celestial messenger; probably Gabriel.

10. *Good tidings of great joy.* The great and joyful Gospel of a Saviour born to save mankind. The angels had caught sight of this salvation and they will send witnesses from the Jews to behold it.

14. *Glory to God. Gloria in excelsis Deo.* These words, expanded by later Christian truths, have rung along the arches of myriad caves and churches since then, and will, until heaven's arches resound with them as a triumphal march of saints and angels, when Christ shall lead home His redeemed. The sanctified heart delights in the very words of Holy writ, and treasures them as exalting its imagination to the world of spirits. Glory to God to whom all glory is due; glory in the highest heaven, in the highest strains, by the highest creatures. There is no end to His greatness: there will be none of the praise of His Church, led on by such bands of angelic ministers. ¶ *On earth peace.* The great blessings which were bestowed on mankind by Christ are summed up in the one word *Peace*, which begins and accompanies them all. To a sinner the Gospel brings pardon, the knowledge of holiness, and the hope of final salvation, and nothing can prevent or disturb the peace which these confer. To the nations of the earth Christianity has taught, so far as they will learn it, lessons of wisdom and mercy, that should put an end to all wars. And through many troubles the leaven of the Gospel will continue to work its silent, resistless way to the final establishment of peace in a new heaven and a new earth. Let each Christian seek for peace with all men, by the practice of those graces and virtues which insure it; for peace with God, by that holiness of life which He requires, and he will have a peace, given not as the world gives it, but precious and past understanding. ¶ *Good will toward men.* God and heaven are reconciled in Christ. He who saw all men wandering in sin and ignorance, would now show forth His mercy, in raising up and perpetuating a kingdom of saints. The Vulgate with many of the Fathers adds the words *to men of good-will.* Mercy is shown to all, but reconciliation or good-will, to those who accept the Gospel and obey it. This chapter thus far, is chosen for the second morning lesson for Christmas Day, and accompanied by Isaiah ix. 1–8; Heb. i. 1–14, and John i. 1–14. They set before us a correct view of the great event recorded in them—*the Divine mystery of the Incarnation.*

16 *They came with haste.* Leaving their flocks they go at once to Bethlehem to search for this wonderful Child

angels were gone away from them into heaven, ‖the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

‖ Or, *the men, the shepherds.*

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard *it*, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

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who was to be their King. As they knew not in what place to find Him, except that He would be in a manger, they go through the town searching for Him till they discover Him. Thus others hear of the vision, and attention is excited among the townspeople. Among others the Roman notary, who had the census in charge, follows on and sees the mother and child, and going his way, records the name of "*Mary, from whom Christ was born:*" a record preserved in Rome for at least *five hundred years.* Thus with haste should we seek the kingdom of heaven, nor rest until we have found peace from this Saviour. No one has diligently sought who has not found. Jesus is still gentle and easy to be entreated by all, who come to Him with humble minds and sincere affections.

17. *When they had seen it.* They found the Infant, and knew Him by the sign. Surprised that their King should appear in such a manner, and filled with wonder, they go out and spread abroad the news. It is noticeable that while the signs which attended the birth of Jesus were as satisfactory as those that attended the birth of John the Baptist, they were not of a kind to excite the immediate attention of the cruel Herod. He would not be likely to be very suspicious of the report of a few ignorant shepherds, nor the degree of belief which would be felt for it, by the poor people of Bethlehem. On the other hand, the birth of John was accompanied with the prophetic song of his priestly father, and would be at once generally known in the higher circles of society. And as far as we can now judge from tradition, it seems to have been the fact, that Herod was jealous of the events which occurred at Hebron; until the visit of the Eastern magi caused him to summon a council of the Jewish teachers, and he learned that Bethlehem was the point of danger.

19. *But Mary kept all these things.* She kept, that is, observed and compared them, remembering all that had been told her, and comparing it with the ancient prophecies. There was already a great body of evidence and of miracles, that might well astonish her. What would be the end? This child born of her, the accounts of Elizabeth, and the story of the shepherds all agreed to show her, that the hand of God was now about her to bring great things to pass. And while the careless world passed on and soon neglected these evidences, she piously kept them in mind. The Christian may profit by this example. In the ways of Providence, we may always find events to be compared which will manifest the care and goodness of God toward us. ¶ *Pondered them.* Literally, *comparing them,* putting them together, and keeping them in memory. This her tenderness as a mother would teach her to do. But she does it also from piety, for she could not but see that God was leading her. ¶ *In her heart.* Memory. The Scriptures disregard utterly most of the distinctions called metaphysical. They deal with man as a whole, who seldom acts in morals with such accurate distinctions in view.

20. *The shepherds returned.* To their

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 And when [a]eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called [b]JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

a Gen. 17. 12; Lev. 12, 3. *b* Matt. 1. 21, 25. *c* Lev. 12. 2–6.

22 And when the [c]days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord;

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, [d]Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said [e]in

d Ex. 13. 2; & 22. 29; Num. 3. 13. *e* Lev. 12. 2–8.

flocks. A vision of angels did not, in those days, give a vocation to idleness, nor change them into preachers. ¶ *Glorifying God.* Praising God for the birth of the Messiah, which they had found exactly agreeing to what had been told them by the angel.

21. *For the circumcising of the child.* This was done on the eighth day according to the law. Gen. xvii. 12; Lev. xii. 1–4. Jesus was born as man under the law, and fulfilled it in all its points, that He might offer a pure sacrifice for mankind. Gal. iv. 4, 5. ¶ *Called Jesus.* The Saviour. See Matt. i. 21.

22. *Days of her purification.* These for the birth of a male child were forty days. Lev. xii. 3, 4. The mother and child were for that period ceremonially *impure;* that is, she was not to go abroad nor enter the temple. The design of this legal impurity was to teach the Jews the nature of sin, which had been brought on them by a woman, and was *original,* or born with them. ¶ *To Jerusalem.* Where the temple was. This rite had been once done "at the door of the 'tabernacle of the congregation.'" Lev. xii. 6. ¶ *To present Him unto the Lord.* By the original law, every male first-born child was holy to the Lord. Ex. xiii. 2. He was to receive the office of priest, originally exercised by the head of every family, as by Noah (Gen. viii. 20), and Job. Job i. 5. Afterwards God chose the tribe of Levi in the place of these first-born to be a perpetual priesthood. Numb. viii. 15–20. But as the first-born still belonged to the Lord by right, since He rescued them from death in Egypt, on the night of the Passover, they were redeemed in memorial of that event. The custom still continues to exist among the modern Jews. "Under the Gospel, we are all first-born; every soul is consecrated to the Lord; we are a royal generation, a holy priesthood."—*Bp. Hall.*

23. *As it is written.* In Ex. xiii. 2. The law had been *modified,* not repealed.

24. *And to offer a sacrifice.* As a testimonial from the female of devout gratitude to God, who had preserved her through the perils of childbirth. As sacrifices were the appointed means of expressing publicly the religious sentiment of the individual, so the pious Jewess would understand it as a due return to Him for His goodness to her, and a testimony of her rejoicing in her child. John xvi. 21. The victims chosen for this service of *atonement* and *cleansing* were the gentlest of animals and birds, the lamb and two species of doves. The Church has a custom not unlike this, which has fallen into unmerited neglect, called the Churching of women,—their thanksgiving after such seasons. The pious women of the Church may still, without indelicacy, offer alms for their poorer, suffering sisters, and privately request the minister to read for them the collect provided by the Prayer Book, on their first return to Church after their time of "great danger." ¶ *According to that*

the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the [a]consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

[a] Is. 40. 1.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

which is said. Lev. xii. 8. The writer shows her poverty. Jesus was born of poor parents, lived among the poor all His life, and had at no time a home, which He could call His own. From this, two thoughts arise: 1. That the religion which so entirely despised all the human influences, which arise from wealth, high birth, power, and learning, must be divine. 2. That He who loved the poor and cast in His lot with them, is no respecter of persons. In the humblest cot and the least instructed mind, if He sees the spark of true, loving devotion, He bends to hear the slightest whisper of prayer and to answer it. He, whose are the cattle upon a thousand hills, took advantage of a privilege of the poorest of His servants under the law, to teach us that His eye regards not the uncertain riches of the world, but the priceless riches of a true and devout heart. Is. lvii. 15.

25. *Simeon.* He was very aged, and probably exceedingly venerable for his piety and wisdom. It may have been the common subject of his conversation among his friends that he expected the fulfilment of the prophecies of Daniel, and was waiting that great event as a signal of dissolution. We cannot conceive a scene of greater beauty than this meeting of the infirmities of age and infancy. It seems as it were an image of the Mosaic law, old and ready to vanish away, receiving into its embrace the Gospel, thence to grow and flourish for ever. Says Bede: "The old man received the infant Christ, to convey thereby that this world, now worn out as it were with old age, should return to the childlike innocence of the Christian life." ¶ *Just.* Known as a righteous and careful observer of the law of God. ¶ *Devout.* One fearing God. The word signifies one conscientious and fearful of offending God. The two words are counterparts of each other. ¶ *Waiting for the consolation of Israel.* Pious and learned Jews were then expecting the Messiah, who was looked for as the comforter and helper of His people. Is. xlix. 13; lii. 9. St. Luke seems to give us the general character of Simeon for piety and wisdom, to show the value of his public testimony to Jesus. ¶ *The Holy Ghost was upon him.* He was favored with prophetic visions; was divinely inspired, and venerable as a witness.

26. *Was revealed.* The original word implies that it was done in an unmistakable manner: it was certain that he should not die till he had seen the Messiah. Of the manner we know nothing, whether by dream, vision, or otherwise. ¶ *Not see death.* Not die. Every language has similar modes of softening the expressions of dying. ¶ *The Lord's Christ.* Or the Lord's Messiah or Anointed. The three words have the same meaning. He was to be Prophet, Priest, and King, to all of which offices men were anointed. Hence his name was soon given in prophecy as the Anointed, or in Hebrew, Messiah, in Greek, Christ. To one of the last of the prophets and holy men of the Old Covenant, the aged Simeon, it was announced, that his death was to occur after the coming in of the Messianic kingdom; thus uniting the two in the scene here described.

27. *By the Spirit.* By His direction.

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, [a]now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For my eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people:

32 A light to lighten the [b]Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

a Gen. 46. 30. *b* Is. 9. 2; & 42. 6; & 49. 6.

¶ *Into the temple.* Into the court of the women, where Mary could enter. It was so called because women could go no further. It was separated from the next court by a low wall of stone. ¶ *To do for Him.* To redeem Him there. The first-born belonged to the Lord and was redeemed by a gift in the temple. It was in memorial of the redemption from Egypt. Ex. xiii. 12, &c.

29. *Lord, now lettest Thou.* Now Thou dost permit. Now Thou art loosing the bands of life that have kept me waiting here. He feels the dissolution of his body, as it were, beginning, and sings his *Nunc Dimmittis*, as it is often called, from the first words of it in Latin. It is used by the English Church in the Evening service, but is displaced in our service by psalms of David. It has been in constant use, and was formerly often chanted by saints and martyrs before their deaths. It is worthy of notice that the three songs of Mary, Zacharias, and Simeon, are consecutive in subject; each begins where the former ends. Mary sings of her devout gratitude; the priest, of the blessing to the Jews; the old man, of the glorious ingathering of the Gentiles. The tradition is, that Simeon died immediately after blessing Mary. No language can describe more gently and perfectly the feelings of a dying saint, who sinks to rest in full confidence in God. ¶ *According to Thy word.* The promise which had been made him.

30. *Salvation.* Throughout these two chapters, the abstract nouns are constantly used. Salvation is used instead of Saviour. His eyes behold an Infant—his faith, a Salvation for his nation, a Saviour of men.

31. *Before the face of all people.* Before all the world. His inspired imagination sees a whole world needing and looking for this Saviour.

32. *A light to lighten the Gentiles.* In allusion to such prophecies as Isaiah lx. he hails the Messiah, who was now arising as the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. Mal. iv. 2. Ignorance of the will of God is to the soul as darkness to the body. Is. vi. 10. The world was lying in ignorance, sin, and in spiritual darkness. Is ix. 2. Jesus, by revealing the knowledge of the true God and eternal life, in a manner mercifully adapted to all human beings and attended with gracious spiritual influences, would lighten the ignorance, pardon and prevent the sin, and save believers of all nations. ¶ *The glory of thy people Israel.* The Jews would reject Christ. But the dying Simeon knew nothing of this. He looked down a glorious future for His people, when the mountain of the Lord's house should be the centre of all earthly praise—when Israel's God should be the delight of the whole earth. In a spiritual sense only has it been true, that Christ was the glory of Israel. Many privileges belonged to that chosen people. The oracles of God were committed to them. Theirs was the adoption by the Lord to be in covenant, and the giving of the law, the Levitical service, and the promises. Of them, "as concerning the flesh, Christ came." Rom. ix. But their eyes were veiled to the true meaning of the Scripture, and despising the spiritual blessings of Christ, they lost their very existence as a nation. Christ is the glory of the true Israel—the redeemed saints who believe in Him.

34. *Simeon blessed them.* Joseph and Mary, the seeming and the true

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall [a]and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yes, a [b]sword shall pierce through thy own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Pha-

a Is. 8. 14; Hos. 14. 9.

b John 19. 25.

parent. He speaks, however, *only to the mother.* Joseph had silently adopted the child as his own. But an inspired man makes a distinction. ¶ *Is set.* Is fixed visibly in the way as a sign or a stumbling-block, to be either reverenced or fallen upon. Matt. xxi. 44. ¶ *For the fall.* See Is. viii. 14, 15. The aged saint looks upon the tender youth of the Virgin, and warns her that her joy shall not be unmingled. Privilege and pain are often united. What exultation could be more graceful and innocent, than that of such a mother. The old man who had tried all earthly things, and was now glad to be gone from them, warns her that there was to be trouble before her child and herself. He would be for the fall of many, who would refuse Him; and the heart now so fondly throbbing for her child, must be pierced with bitter grief, before God's purposes could be effected. It is the first *minor* note of the coming tragedy. All had been joyful to this. How venerable are the aged when wise and holy, they yet sympathize with the inexperienced, and seek to guide them along the paths of wisdom. How happy for the young, to hear their warnings, who like Mary, lay them up in their hearts, and ponder them. ¶ *And rising again.* Not necessarily of those who fall, but the rising up of many who are prostrate, to worship and follow Him. The word *again* has the meaning here of rising up. Some of the hearers of Christ would refuse to obey Him through unbelief, and should fall into ruin. Others would hear and believe and rise up from the darkness or torpidity, in which they had before been, and follow Him gladly to the salvation of their souls. ¶ *And for a sign.* A visible proof of God's presence among His people. Our Saviour likened Himself to a corner-stone, refused by the builders, over which they stumbled, or by which they were destroyed. It was a portentous object. They would not believe, yet could not deny it, but could only speak against it. The language of Simeon agrees with this. He warns Mary that her Child would be treated with insult and scorn by unbelievers. This lesson was the more necessary to prevent her from forming worldly ideas of Him, as a mighty and popular monarch, waited on by angels as well as men. Jesus is still a sign to be spoken against; men believe not, oppose and seek to destroy, but after all their rage and noise, the Sign is still the visible power of God for salvation to all who believe.

35. *Yea, a sword.* Some would infer from these words, that the Virgin suffered martyrdom by the sword. They probably refer only to the grief which she was to feel at the death of Jesus. It pierced her soul as a sword, rending it as none but a mother's imagination can conceive—and hardly that; for, who can depict the grief of mingled tenderness and awe, as beholding the agony of her Son, her own flesh and blood who had loved and obeyed her without a fault; at the same time her Saviour, infinitely awful to her as to others. ¶ *That the thoughts.* These words seem to belong to the preceding verse, though not necessarily. For the sword piercing Mary's heart is the climax of the foregoing words, alluding to the Crucifixion. That event must occur, and her heart must be grieved, before the thoughts of other hearts would be revealed. Jesus was to be crucified in order to fulfil His great work. Then the cross would bring out the secret thoughts and in-

nuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers [a]night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in [‖]Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

a Acts 26. 7; 1 Tim. 5. 5. ‖ Or, *Israel.*

tentions of all men. Up to that time many secretly believed on Him. It is noticeable that beyond the twelve, and occasionally the seventy, Jesus did not permit men to follow Him, for fear of commotions in the state. Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and many others believed on Him, and hoped doubtless to live peaceably as they were then doing. So of His enemies; their rage was increased tenfold after His death and resurrection. For after that period His kingdom was collected and organized, and no one could longer remain neutral.

36. *One Anna a prophetess.* St. Ambrose remarks that there lacked no sex or condition of life in giving testimony to Jesus. A priest, an aged saint, a woman married, a virgin, and here a widow prophesies. ¶ *Of the tribe of Aser.* They once occupied the northern part of the land of Canaan. The prophetic gift was not confined to any one tribe. It had almost disappeared at this time in Judea. These two inspired and venerable saints are left to bear witness to the Messiah.

37. *Of fourscore, &c.* She had lived seven years in the married state, and was now eighty-four years old. ¶ *Fastings and prayers.* St. Luke gives those evidences of her piety, which could be referred to by any reader of his Gospel. A life thus spent would not soon be lost from the memory of the people. ¶ *Night and day.* That is, at all proper appointed times of religious worship. There were times when she would leave the sacred hill, but she was there so constantly that it may be said she lived in it during that long period. The temple stood open continually. At any time the pious could enter and pay his vows and make his prayer to God. A life of continued, persevering devotion, and attendance upon divine worship, ensures a reward. Years had gone over this woman, yet the Lord came at last to bless her eyes, before they closed in death. And while we live thus near His footstool, we are receiving the graces which bring peace at the last.

38. *To all them.* We gain a glimpse of the saints, who were at that time looking for a Redeemer. We are apt to believe that the Jews were altogether wicked. Many were waiting and ready to confess the Messiah, and though slowly yet surely did believe on Him. Mal. iii. 16. ¶ *Redemption.* The Redeemer. The One who was to redeem Israel.

39. *Returned to Galilee.* This was in February. And no farther particulars are recorded in the Gospels, of this year. By the end of the year Joseph and Mary appear to have left Nazareth, and returned to Bethlehem, as we find them living there at the time of the visit of the Magi, which we conceive, to have happened on the sixth of January of the next year. It may seem strange that single Evangelists should have omitted events of importance. They have done so, and in this case we may reconcile them by the universal ancient tradition which assigns the Epiphany to January 6. Had the visit of the Magi, and the flight to Egypt happened before the visit of Mary to the temple, then the visit would have been impossible. We put the flight to Egypt after it, and follow tradition;

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem[a] every year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went

[a] Ex. 23. 15, 17; & 34. 23; Deut. 16. 1, 16.

a guide worthy to be heard, before the *conjectures* of any modern authors.

40. *Waxed strong in spirit.* Increased in body and developed in mind naturally, as according to His human nature he must have done. The Fathers combated several heresies concerning the *humanity* of Christ by this verse. ¶ *Filled with wisdom.* Such as became Him, yet was remarkable in a youth. He who spake as never man spake before Him, must have manifested similar wisdom from the first. Yet, had it pleased God to preserve the record, we would have found that childlike wisdom to have been simple and natural—the perfect wisdom of obedience to God, in His relations as a child. The legends preserved of this period of His life are very unworthy, and evidently suggested by the wild fancies of some unstable Christians of the early ages. God has ordered the volume of revelation, so as to give us enough, to help us to believe and be saved. More than this He saw to be prejudicial, and suffered it to perish from memory.

42. *Twelve years old.* The pious parents were accustomed to obey the law, which required their presence in Jerusalem three times a year. Deut. xvi. 16. It was on one of these occasions, when Jesus was twelve years old, that they took Him with them. At that age the mind expands and can be said to form its own conclusions independently. And it is thought by some that a service was common among the Jews of receiving the male children into the temple at that age, answering to our service of Confirmation. Parents should learn to accustom their children, from their earliest years, to a strict, devout attendance on the services of religion. ¶ *After the custom of the feast.* After the custom of the Jews of going to Jerusalem to this feast, from all the villages and towns of Judea. Lev. xxiii. 5, 6.

44. *In the company.* For safety against robbers and wild beasts, the Jews from a distance travelled in large companies or caravans, taking with them tents and provisions, to encamp at the end of each day's journey. Perhaps the greater part of the villagers of Nazareth, and their friends of the adjoining towns, travelled together. During the day it was natural that a family should be scattered as inclination led them. Journeying in safety with their kindred, the parents of Jesus did not miss Him for the day, or felt no alarm at not seeing Him. At night, however, each family collected to its own tent, and they were at once disturbed by not finding Him. ¶ *Kinsfolk and acquaintance.* Their relations and neighbors in the caravan. ¶ *After three days.* Probably on the third day after leaving Jerusalem. The day after they returned to look for Him. The Jewish mode of reckoning days is somewhat peculiar. See note, Matt. xxvii. 63. ¶ *In the temple.* Two words in the original are rendered temple; one meaning the actual Tabernacle, containing only the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, the other including all the courts. The latter is here used, as only the priests could enter the former. It was probably in some one of the porches frequented by the Jews that they found Him. ¶ *The doctors.* The wise men, scribes and

a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my [a]Father's business?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with

[a] John 2. 16.

others, called Rabbis, whose duty it was to teach the law to the people, and to instruct youth. ¶ *Asking them questions.* Both were common in the Jewish schools. The scholars listened to the teacher, and then modestly put such questions, in regard to difficult matters, as they wished. Jesus was conforming to the proper customs and courtesies of the people. As a child He was docile and modest. Though afterwards these same arches heard His indignant rebukes of the false doctors, yet now, He doubtless manifested as well the docility as the wisdom that became Him. It is the glory of a child to hear and inquire with an obedient mind.

48. *Why hast Thou thus dealt with us?* It was strange. He had not before left them, or caused them anxiety—why now? The sublime reply explains the strangeness of His conduct. Does she not learn that He knows and prepares to execute His true Father's work? ¶ *Thy father and I.* Joseph was not His true father. But he was such in authority, having adopted Him. The secret of His birth had not gone beyond those, who could receive it, and it may be, had never been communicated to Him by His mother. But if we suppose Him to have now been presented in the temple, as it were, to bear His own part as one of the males of Israel, then it may be that Jesus seizes this occasion to show her that He knows and forgets not His real Father's mission.

49. *How is it that ye sought Me?* "Why go about seeking Me? My mother, hast thou forgotten the past, the angel, the miracle, My birth and office? Could I have been lost who have God for my Father, and such glorious promises to fulfil?" ¶ *Wist ye not?* Do ye not know. Wist is an old English word, which is now nearly disused. It means to know well or consider. ¶ *My Father's business.* It is to be noted that while this reply was *unintelligible* to the bystanders, it was perfectly satisfactory to His parents. And His mother *kept it in her heart*, for to her it was very emphatic. He knew His Father to be God. Only (as she may have seen) by superior knowledge could He have known it. And it taught her to expect that when the hour came He would enter on His higher duties. Compare it with His reply to her, John iii. 4. The words admit of another rendering which seems still more pointed—"In My Father's house"—that is, in the temple. Why then seek Me elsewhere?

50. *They understood not.* They, like His disciples, had need of the Holy Spirit to understand the Divinity which was in Him. The facts of the past they knew well, but all that was implied in His words, they could not yet receive.

them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus [a] increased in wisdom and [‖]stature, and in favour with God and man.

CHAP. III.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar,

a 1 Sam. 2. 26. ‖ Or, *age.*

Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 [b]Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

b John 11. 49, 51; & 18. 13.

Compare the ignorance of the disciples, who, after all that was taught them, did not in some cases understand the plainest doctrines, which are now taught by cottage dames.

51. *Went down with them.* Down from Jerusalem, which is elevated above the sea about 2,200 feet. ¶ *Was subject unto them.* Obeyed them as a dutiful child. It is supposed that He followed the occupation of Joseph, who was a carpenter, for the eighteen years following. What an example is this set before youth. Let them reflect upon it wisely. He who knew His own powers, who was filled with wisdom, before whom the wisest men of His nation were amazed, submitted willingly to the rule of His parents, and continued in a common and laborious occupation, until God should summon Him to a higher work. How sacred must be the duty we owe to our parents. How certain are they to be condemned who neglect to perform it. How inexcusable to neglect them. What folly before high Heaven to behold a child despising them. And let parents bear in mind that to train up their children in the fear of the Lord alone secures themselves from neglect. Many are ambitious for their children. They teach them to aspire to worldly vanities, educate them frivolously and fashionably. Their reward is that their children follow the fashions of the world, and forget the sacred duties which a more religious training would have taught them. Society had never greater need of warning against these follies and sins than at present.

52. *In favor with God and man.* In proportion to His growth and development of body and mind, it became more evident that God favored Him with peculiar graces. Some writers represent the human heart as hating holiness by a bad instinct. But here we hear of Jesus the perfect, growing in favor with *man.* They saw "how lovely virtue is, saw and confessed." They were willing to rejoice in His light. It was only when He called on them to give up their love of the world that they were averse. And while men will rage like the sea against goodness which calls them to repentance, they can never cease to pay it the tribute of their admiration.

CHAPTER III.

1. *Now in the fifteenth year.* It was the fifteenth year of his being associated with Augustus in the supreme power. It was the eleventh year of his being sole emperor.—*Dr. Jarvis.* ¶ *Tiberius Cesar.* He succeeded Augustus Cesar, Aug. 19, A. D. 13, as commonly reckoned, but in reality the *nineteenth* year of our Lord's life. He was a cruel and arbitrary tyrant, detested by all men. He recalled Annas Rufus, governor of Judea, and sent in his place Valerius Gratus. This person remained eleven years procurator. He deposed four high priests in as many years: Ananus, the Annas of the Gospels, Ishmael, Eleazar, son of Ananus, and Simon, who made way for Joseph Caiaphas, son-in-law of Ananus. Pontius Pilate was his successor. Tiberius reigned twenty-three years. ¶ *Pontius Pilate.* He came as procurator of the province of Judea, about the date of

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, [a]The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth.

6 And all [b]flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, [c]O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth, therefore, fruits ‖worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

a Is. 40. 3. *b* Ps. 98. 2; Is. 52. 10. *c* Matt. 3. 7. ‖ Or, *meet for.*

John's first ministry. A bold man, his first act was an outrage on the feelings of the nation. He sent within the city of Jerusalem a body of soldiers to winter there, who bore on their standards the images of the emperor. The Jews obtained their removal after many entreaties. There could be no better mode of fixing a date than by the acts of such a man. ¶ *Herod being tetrarch of Galilee.* Herod Antipas, son of the monster Herod the Great; who had been left by his father ruler of the province of Galilee. The word tetrarch signifies properly a ruler of a fourth part, but is used with more latitude here, as he had received a third part of the kingdom of his father. See notes, Matt. ii. 1, and xiv. 1. John the Baptist was slain and our Saviour mocked by this Herod. His brother Philip also received a third part of the kingdom of Herod. ¶ *Iturea.* A district in the north-east of Palestine, east of the Jordan, received its name from Jethur, one of the sons of Ishmael. Gen. xxv. 15; 1 Chron. v. 19. It had been subdued by Aristobulus, who compelled the people to submit to the rites of the Jews. The name of the province is still preserved in the modern El-Jedur. ¶ *Region of Trachonitis.* These regions were bordering upon the former, east of the Jordan. The name signifies a rough, mountainous country. Philip had received it on a promise to drive out the hordes of wild banditti who infested it. ¶ *Lysanias.* Nothing is known of him. ¶ *Of Abilene.* Called from Abila, its principal city, a region lying north-west of Damascus, in the mountains of Anti-Libanus.

2. *Annas and Caiaphas being high priests.* According to the Jewish law, there could be but one high priest at a time. St. Luke, however, is not stating what should have been, but only taking up important names as he found them, in order to fix the date of his history. It is sufficient, therefore, for his purpose, that he finds these two, Caiaphas the son-in-law to Annas, *actual* high priest, and Annas, a man of very great influence, a deposed and it may be *virtual* high priest, a ruler of the Sanhedrim, and sagan or deputy to Caiaphas. As Annas had been unjustly deposed by a heathen ruler, it may be that in the opinion of the stricter Jews, he was still termed the high priest, and a degree of power put into his hands that made him of equal consequence with Caiaphas. It was before him that Jesus

11 He answereth and saith unto them, [a]He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then came also [b]publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

a Jas. 2. 15; 1 John 3. 17. *b* Matt. 21. 32; Ch. 7. 29.

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, ‖Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely:

‖ Or, *put no man in fear.*

was first conveyed on the night of His trial, and (Acts xxiii. 5) he is called "the ruler of the people." It is noticeable that St Luke alone seems to have felt the importance of attaching to his narratives dates from common history. He has done it effectually, for while the first readers must have had it in their power to challenge these names if erroneous, and did not do so; it shows us that the Apostles were not afraid to call on those who could testify, for the proofs of their veracity. There is no concealment. He fixes the date by an emperor on the one side, and a petty governor on the other. The one man all knew; the mention of the other manifests that the writer lived near Judea, and wrote at the time. And while we leave such proofs to those ages, and draw an irrefragable argument from their *silence* for the correctness of them; learned men are still able from these dates to fix the years of our Lord's life with precision.

3–9. On the baptism of John. See notes, Matt. iii.

10. *What shall we do then?* John had caused great searchings of heart. He called on men for fruits meet for repentance, and told of a King at hand, who was to purge out the chaff, and cut down the unfruitful trees. They ask properly how they shall bring forth these fruits; what they are to do in preparation.

11. *Let him impart.* 'Let him distribute of his abundance to relieve the needy. What shall you do? Be charitable, benevolent, brotherly.' He calls them off from the external and often trifling services of their blind guides, and bids them prepare, by charity and an unworldly spirit, for the coming Messiah. They were to hold their goods on this tenure, which charity teaches, as objects of usefulness to others; and doing this, would manifest their preparation for Christ. ¶ *Meat.* Provision of any kind. The people were not at home, but now on the banks of the Jordan. The distribution taught was very appropriate under such circumstances. These verses give us specimens of the *spirit* only of St. John's teaching.

12. *Publicans.* Tax collectors. See notes on Matt. v. 47. They are said, as a class, to have been very unjust and given to extortion in their dealings. John does not forbid their trade nor the life of the soldiers, but regulates them. He distinguishes the abuses of their callings from the duties of them. They are necessary occupations. He gives rules how they should be governed.

13. *Exact.* Ask and receive only what is due. ¶ *That which is appointed.* The rate set by the government. The taxes were farmed to subordinate officers by the Roman government. No salary was paid them; but, on the other hand, they paid high prices for the privilege of collecting the rates. They repaid themselves by extortion, and often in a manner so ruthless that they were, and yet are, as a class, deservedly hated as the pests of Eastern society.

14. *The soldiers likewise.* In a rapid narrative a writer takes in only the more marked points. We should hardly expect soldiers at such a place. ¶ *Do violence.* No condition of life is excluded from salvation. The violent and unjust

and be content with your ‖wages.

15 And as the people were ‖in expectation, and all men ‖mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the [a]wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

‖ Or, *allowance.* ‖ Or, *in suspense.* ‖ Or, *reasoned*, or *debated.*

a Mic. 4. 12; Matt. 13. 30.

soldier is punished. But if he repents and asks what he must do, the reply is, as to all, Avoid all sin, and especially those to which you are exposed by your calling. There were in the purest ages many Christians in the armies of the Empire. ¶ *Neither accuse any falsely.* Under our mild and peaceful government, we can form a faint idea of the crimes, which are common in countries subjected to military rule. The East is still kept in the lowest degradation by this rule. No one can be safe. The false accusation of a rude soldier may cause his ruin, and there is no redress, unless in resorting to the same means in revenge. Blessed is the land, where an equal law and a righteous people render such things impossible. ¶ *With your wages.* They were to be obedient and satisfied with that which was paid them. The wages were paid both in rations and money. Who were these soldiers? The word in Greek signifies that they were *those marching under arms.* Josephus informs us, that Herod was at this time engaged in a war with his father-in-law, Aretas, a petty king of Arabia Petræa, whose daughter he had repudiated. His army must have marched by the spot where John was baptizing. Such coincidences are never found except in true histories. John looks not to the object of the war, nor the character of the kings, but promulgates the great principles of morality to all alike. Afterwards he upbraided this same Herod for the crime which had made this war necessary. Let ministers of the Gospel learn to avoid politics and fanaticism, and to confine themselves to the objects of their vocation. It will be a gain to them of real influence; a gain to others of peace.

15. *In expectation.* The people were now in a state of expectation regarding John, and were musing or reasoning in their minds whether this young priest were not the Christ. They saw his influence over men, and perhaps began to give utterance to their thoughts, when John at once corrects them.

16–18. See notes Matt. iii. 11, 12.

19, 20. *But Herod—shut up John.* We suppose John to have begun his preaching on the great day of Atonement, Sept. 29, and to have continued it about fourteen months. On the following year, in November, probably, he was imprisoned. A year and more afterwards, after Jesus had sent forth His disciples on their first brief mission to the towns of Judea, he was put to death by Herod in the castle of Machaerus. St. Luke mentions the imprisonment of John, as he now takes leave of him. See Matt. xiv. 1–13.

21, 22. See notes, Matt. iii. 13–17. *And praying.* This is omitted by the other Evangelists. A Christian may learn to value prayer, when he beholds the Saviour thus engaged, in all the

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also[a] being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about[b] thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of [c]Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli,

24 Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph,

25 Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge,

26 Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda,

27 Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri,

28 Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er,

29 Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi,

30 Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim,

31 Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha,

a Matt. 3. 13; John 1. 32.

b Mic. 4. 3, 35. *c* Matt. 13. 55.

solemn scenes of His life. The best of us will regret our present coldness to this duty, when in another life we shall see how powerful was the agency it exercised upon us. For what did He pray? Were not all things promised? Could He alter any? Yet He prays, and praying, the heavens open and the Holy Ghost descends.

22. *In a bodily shape.* As a dove. This was to anoint Him for His work. Henceforth He ministers before God as the Messiah, anointed, not with the carnal oil of the temple, but with the oil of gladness; even the Spirit, of which the other was a symbol. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. The Spirit was, in a manner, brooding over the spiritual, new creation, and came down in the form of a dove to rest upon the head of Jesus. At Pentecost, the fiat of, Let there be spiritual light, was sent forth, and it appeared in tongues of flame, emblematic of the Gospel which was then finished and perfected.

23. *Jesus began to be.* He was about that age. On the 25th December preceding His baptism our Lord completed His thirtieth year. It was the sacerdotal age required by the law, and the age at which His ancestor David ascended the throne. See Numb. iv. 3–47. On the Epiphany, Jan. 6, as is reported by tradition, He presented Himself to His relative and forerunner, to receive his public testimony to the office of Messiah. Then God, the Spirit and the Prophet, combined to declare Him the

which was *the son* of [a]Nathan, [b]which was *the son* of David,

32 Which [c]was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson,

33 Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda,

34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara,[d] which was *the son* of Nachor,

35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala,[e]

36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of [f]Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech,

37 Which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan,

38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam,[g] which was *the son* of God.

CHAPTER IV.

AND [h]Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from

a Zech. 12. 12. *b* 2 Sam. 5. 14; 1 Chron. 3. 5. *c* Ruth 4. 15, &c.; 1 Chron. 2. 10, &c. *d* Gen. 11. 24, 26. *e* Gen. 11. 12. *f* Gen. 5, 6, &c.; 11. 10, &c. *g* Gen. 5. 1, 2. *h* Matt. 4. 1.

Holy One of Israel, and thenceforth He labored in the work for which He had been sent. ¶ *As was supposed.* Not being so in truth, since He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. St. Luke was writing for a Greek, and for Gentiles in general. Now with them he would hardly use the argument, that Jesus was the supposed son of Joseph, &c., as a proof of His descent from the saints of old, an argument which St. Matthew would find sufficient with Jews. It is thought by many learned men, therefore, that Luke gives the actual descent of our Lord by His mother Mary. But as females are not usually mentioned in catalogues of names like this, he omits her name. Let the reader now cast his eye to the list, and know that the words in italics, *the son*, are not in the Greek, except in the first instance. The catalogue, then, may read thus: Jesus, as it was supposed, son of Joseph, but really of Mary, *daughter* of Heli, *son* of Matthat, &c. A similar use is found Gen. xxxvi. 2, only that the word daughter is expressed throughout, Anah being a man's name. See notes, Matt. i. 1–6, for the other explanations.

CHAPTER IV.

1–14. See notes of the temptation: Matt. iv. 1–11.

2. *Being forty days tempted.* Rather being led around in the desolate wilderness for forty days, and at the end of it tempted. He wandered during that time under a Divine impulse, to which He yielded implicit obedience. He was subject in some measure to temptation from the first. Thus God prepared Him by meditation and secret prayer for His ministry. ¶ *Did eat nothing.* He was sustained by a miraculous power, as was Moses and Elijah before Him. Deut. ix. 9; 1 Kings xix. 8.

13. *Departed from Him for a season.* Satan renewed his attacks by means of wicked men, who were his agents, and in the hour of our Lord's greatest trial again appeared in the person of Judas (ch. xxii. 3), and possibly otherwise. John xiv. 30. If Satan tempted Jesus, more surely will he tempt us, and we may learn from Him, how by constant

Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty[a] days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, [b]It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: [c]for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt ‖worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is [d]written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence.

10 For it is [e]written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering, said unto him, It is [f]said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him [g]for a season.

14 ¶ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 ¶ And he came to Nazareth, [h]where he had been brought up:

a Ex. 34. 28; 1 Kings 19. 8. *b* Deut. 8. 3. *c* John 12, 31; & 14. 30; Rev. 13. 2, 7. ‖ Or, *fall down before me.*

d Deut. 6. 13; & 10. 20. *e* Ps. 91. 11. *f* Deut. 6. 16. *g* John 14. 30; Heb. 4. 15. *h* Matt. 13. 54.

resistance to subdue temptation. Usually the temptations of the Evil one are more severe at the beginning of a Christian life; if then resisted they become feebler. No temptation can meet the believer, but he may conquer it by grace. 1 Cor. x. 13; 1 John iii. 8, 9.

14. *In the power of the Spirit.* Under the powerful influence and guidance of the Spirit, Jesus now entered upon His mission. John iii. 34.

15. *Being glorified of all.* Being praised by all His hearers, who listened to all His doctrines and saw His miracles.

16. *As His custom was.* Our Lord, as a pious, devout member of the Jewish Church, was blameless in all points respecting the law of Moses. He attended the temple at the appointed times, and the synagogues when they were opened for worship. In them He used their liturgy, for the Jews knew nothing of *extempore* services. The prayers were written. The praises were mostly after the Psalter form; and any grave or remarkable person was requested by some one of the elders, to expound a passage of Scripture. Jesus as a member of the synagogue of Nazareth, was called upon to read. We learn from this custom of our Lord, how futile the

and, as his custom [a]was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The [b]Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

a Acts 13. 14; & 17. 2. *b* Is. 61. 1.

objection commonly made against set forms of worship: and again that we ought to attend regularly that mode of worship, which we believe that Christ has instituted; for Jesus was obedient to a system about to vanish away, under its obselete customs and human traditions. We may not urge His example to justify a restless curiosity and wandering in ourselves, from place to place. We should hold fast a form of sound words, and seek for holiness in the old paths which have been trodden from the beginning. ¶ *Synagogue.* See note, Matt. iv. 23. ¶ *Stood up for to read.* Scholars are satisfied that we can now discover the usual forms of prayer and reading the Scripture, of that day. The books of Moses and the prophets were arranged so as to be read through once a year. Jesus probably read the regular lesson for the day. He stood up to do it, from reverence to the sacred word: a custom still recalled by the service which directs the people to rise on hearing the Gospel for the day announced. This event we suppose to have happened in the second year of His ministry, just after the miracle done to the nobleman's son in the neighboring village of Capernaum. The people are astonished at His teaching, and muse in their hearts, whether He will show them His wonderful power in healing the sick.

17. *There was delivered unto Him.* The service was conducted by several readers in succession. The chief person in authority, or the last reader gave Him the roll of parchment containing the prophecies. ¶ *The book.* There were of course no books bound after our fashion. Books were then written out on sheets of parchment, fastened together on the sides, and rolled upon two rollers; and each portion of Scripture was kept distinct.

8. *Opened the book.* Opening consisted in *unrolling* the scroll, until the passage became visible. There were other forms of books sometimes found, but this was the most common. ¶ *The place.* Is. lxi. 1, 2. Possibly they gave Him the book of Isaiah, in order to hear from Him something concerning His claim to be the Messiah, who was to fulfil its prophecies. If so, Jesus rebukes that carnal ambition of their hearts, which thus early began to look for signs of temporal power, and teaches them that His kingdom is not of this world, nor confined to His relations after the flesh.

18, 19. *The Spirit of the Lord.* This is a noble declaration of the Messianic kingdom; and Jesus adopts it on this occasion, to teach the Nazarenes the real nature of His work. We have no record of the manner in which He expounded these words, as St. Luke gives only the brief account of the *effect* of His discourse. The Spirit of the Lord was upon the Messiah, to give Him divine power to work miracles and to teach truth, as it had been on other prophets before Him, in lesser degree. The words of Isaiah may apply directly to the release of the Jews from Babylon. But they could not have their *full* spiritual meaning, till they were fulfilled in the Messiah, releasing captives from the dominion of sin. ¶ *Anointed.* See note, Matt. i. 1. It carried to the ears of the Jews, the same idea as if we should hear one say, "the Lord hath ordained or consecrated me to preach." Oil was for a long time used in ordain-

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the

ing by the Christians, but has been set aside among us, on account of Romish corruptions and superstition. Jesus had been anointed by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost, at His baptism, which "power of the Spirit" was then on Him. ¶ *To preach the Gospel.* In Isaiah, "to preach *good tidings.*" The Gospel is so called because it is *God-spell*—a good-speech or word. It tells all men the way of salvation. ¶ *To the poor.* Isaiah spake first to a nation of poor captive Jews, the figures of the wretched sons of want every where, who are led captive of Satan at his will. The Saviour preached to the poor, in both senses of the word. See note, Matt. v. 3. 1. He lived a life of poverty; called poor men about Him; spent a great portion of His ministry in comforting the wretched and afflicted. He, therefore, has given such a mould to the Gospel, that it appeals most powerfully to the wants and sympathies of persons who are poor in this world. They who are afflicted may consider Him who suffered such contradiction of sinners against Himself. Heb. xii. 3. And 2. He preached to the poor in spirit, those who in any circumstances of human life, are humble and spiritually minded. Salvation may visit the houses of the rich who believe in Jesus, as quickly as the poor. Many poor are not blessed because of pride and unbelief; and many are disposed to vaunt themselves upon their mere poverty, as if it commended them to God. Let rich and poor remember that God looks to the heart and is not a respecter of persons. He loves those who fear Him, whether in the hut of the African servant or in the palace of a queen. ¶ *To heal the broken-hearted.* There would be many such among the returning captives of Babylon. Ps. cxxxvii. And in the world, the Gospel finds out a large class, into whose wounded hearts it pours the oil of gladness; to the broken-hearted by sin, the news of forgiveness; to the incurably afflicted, the news of rest in heaven; to the mourner, the news of the resurrection and eternal life. ¶ *Deliverance of the captives.* The Gospel by teaching men mercy, and by controlling kings and governors, has set open many a prison door; though, alas, it has much yet to do, before injustice and cruelty cease, even among Christians. But it breaks the power of the strong man, the old Adam, and the evil spirit, who are more dangerous to us than any earthly tyrant. It gives deliverance by teaching the way of escape from spiritual bondage. ¶ *Sight to the blind.* The Hebrew has it, "and freedom to those bound in prison." St. Luke gives the words of the Septuagint or Greek translation of the prophet. The two readings are closely connected in sense. It was common in the East to put out the eyes of prisoners. Judges xvi. 21; 2 Kings xxv. 7. ¶ *To set at liberty them that are bruised.* Another class among captives were those, who had been cruelly treated in hard labor or by severe punishments. The Gospel comes to many such, to release them from the pressure of their burdens, and give them grace to bear the woes, which their own or others' sins have brought upon them. ¶ *The acceptable year of the Lord.* The year of Jubilee. In every fiftieth year, the land of Israel was to rest, the debtors and slaves were to be released, possessions to be restored, and oppression to cease. Lev. xxv. 8–13. The Jews for refusing to observe this year of jubilee, among other sins, were sent into captivity seventy years, that the land might enjoy her Sabbaths. Lev. xxvi. 34; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. What language could more eloquently express the glad period of their return, than this "acceptable year." It also describes the acceptable time of the Christian covenant, when the Lord listens to the prayers of men and is favorable to them. 2 Cor vi. 2.

20. *To the minister.* The *Chasan,* or

synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's [a]son?

[a] John 6. 42.

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, [b]No prophet is accepted in his own country.

[b] Mark 6. 4; John 4. 44.

servant, whose duty it was to take care of the rolls of the Scripture, and to observe that no one erred in the public reading of them. ¶ *Sat down.* As the custom was, He sat down to teach and expound what had been read.

21. *This Scripture.* These words of Isaiah. ¶ *Fulfilled.* Made good; shown to be true in their spiritual meaning. ¶ *In your ears.* Your hearing. There can be no doubt, that Jesus fully explained this passage to them. St. Luke, however, was not inspired to record all that He said, but those things only which suffice for the great end of convincing us that Jesus was the Christ, and the Author of Salvation to believers. The custom of preaching from a short text, seems to have derived its origin from this example of our Lord.

22. *Wondered at the gracious words.* Were astonished at the wisdom and force with which He explained the language of the Prophet, and taught them of the real nature of the Messianic kingdom; how it blessed the poor and exalted them, making them sons of God. So long as Jesus spake of privilege and grace, they wondered, and bore willing witness to Him. But how fickle the sinful heart. He represents God as merciful to others, and they are enraged. They felt that the words of Isaiah were strangely applicable to their day; that there was convincing truth in the discourse of Jesus, but they took offence at the humility of His family. They were puzzled to reconcile this, and asked each other, as if it were a great difficulty—"Is not this Joseph's son? Let Him show us some of these miraculous powers, that we may believe on Him." It was easier for strangers to believe on Him, than for those who had seen Him grow up from childhood before their eyes.

23. *Ye will surely say.* That is, Your thoughts now are perplexed between My words and My poverty. Ye are convinced of the truth of the former, but will not comprehend how I can be Messias, unless I do some wonderful work before your eyes; and if you express your perplexity, it will turn on that proverb. ¶ *Proverb.* Any common saying which is confessed to be true by all men, and applied to cases of similar kind, as an illustration or argument. ¶ *Physician, heal thyself.* If a physician offers to cure others of a disease under which he is laboring himself, as all men are supposed to love themselves at least as well as others, it is a good argument that he is a quack, and a sufficient rebuke would be to bid him first heal himself. "Prove the medicine to be good in regaining your own health, and we will believe and suffer you to give it to us." So the Nazarenes were thinking. Before we believe these arguments, show the same power here which we have heard of Your showing in other places. Begin at home to do miracles. Jesus repeatedly rebuked this same spirit, and did no miracle at the suggestion of evil beings, or wicked men. See notes, Matt. iv. 6, and xvi. 1. ¶ *Whatsoever we have heard, &c.* Jesus had wrought two miracles at Cana in Galilee. John ii. 1; iv. 46. The news had spread His fame abroad. And we may suppose the Nazarenes to have been jealous, as well as dubious. They would have

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days[a] of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land.

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a*

a 1 Kings 17. 9; & 18. 1; John 5. 17.

city of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

27 And many lepers[b] were in Israel, in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the syna-

b 2 Kings 5. 14.

Jesus show peculiar honor to his own village. Jesus rebukes this narrow spirit in them.

24. *No prophet, &c.* A proverb to answer the other. They wanted faith, and therefore saw no miracles. Like all proverbs, this must not be forced into an infallible rule. It is often, not always true. See note, Matt. xiii. 57.

25. *In the days of Elias.* When Elijah lived. See 1 Kings, xvii. 8–24. Jesus cites two instances from the sacred history. There were many poor widows in the land of Israel, in that age, who suffered during the long season of drought sent upon the land. Why were they not aided? Read the story carefully. The widow of Sarepta when tried by the word of the prophet, and commanded to do a *hard* thing, had such a reverence for him and such trust in God, that she believed and obeyed. Others might have done the same, but the implication is that they would not have paid reverence to the word of Elijah. ¶ *Three years and six months.* So also St. James, v. 17. In the first book of Kings, it would seem that the rain fell at the end of the third year. We have an instance of the ease with which a true narrative is proved to be correct, from little, unthought-of events. There were two regular periods of rain in Judea, October and April. The rain ceasing in one month, is delayed by the word of God at the next period. The historian describes it as three years from that event till the next rain. The reader recalls the *severity* of the drought, and remembers that there was, at the beginning of it, a soil dried by six months lack of rain. ¶ *A great famine.* Extreme suffering for want of food. The Jews suffered greatly whenever their usual crops failed.

24. *Sarepta.* In the Old Testament Zarephath, a town of the Gentiles belonging to Sidon, on the sea-shore, about one hundred miles north of Jerusalem. Elijah fled thither to hide himself from the malice of Ahab and Jezebel, enraged against him because of his piety, and the drought which had come at his word. Thus by the wickedness of the king, and a natural train of events, the widows of Israel were passed by, and a heathen woman blessed. The Nazarenes could easily apply the moral.

27. *Many lepers.* See notes, Matt viii. 1. ¶ *Eliseus.* Elisha, the successor of Elijah. ¶ *Naaman.* See 2 Kings, v. 14. The same remarks are in place here. Other lepers did not *believe*, and go to the prophet. Naaman did. His faith was remarkable, and brought him from afar, and made him very humble, and wrought his cure. If others had felt the same faith, there would have been mercy shown to them. And the hearers of this warning, wanting faith in "Joseph's son," gave another fulfilment to the proverb.

28. *Filled with wrath.* Not with repentance nor reverence. Jesus showed them their danger, and instead of being warned, they were enraged. He could do no miracle because of their unbelief. He would go to other places, and bear the blessings of grace, as their prophets had done. How strong the bigotry that bound them. How certain it is, that the idea of an universal Gospel could never have sprung from such a nation. It came from God.

29. *Brow of the hill.* Nazareth was

gogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the ‖brow of the hill, (whereon their city was built,) that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way,

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: [a] for his word was with power.

33 ¶ And in the [b]synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil; and he cried out with a loud voice,

34 Saying, ‖Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the [c]Holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

‖ Or, *edge.* *a* Matt. 7. 29. *b* Mark 1. 23. ‖ Or, *away.*

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 ¶ And he arose out [d] of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 ¶ Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him: and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he, rebuking *them*, suffered them not ‖to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

c Ps. 16. 10; Dan. 9. 24. *d* Matt. 8. 14. ‖ Or, *to say that they knew Him to be Christ.*

built in a valley between two hills and partly upon them. One of them ends in a precipice about fifty feet high, overlooking the plain of Esdraelon. The traveller in Palestine is still shown the Gebel-Nazra, the hill of Nazareth, a mountain range bounding the north side of the plain. ¶ *Cast Him down.* They forgot the holy Sabbath, the laws of the land, the sinless example of thirty years, and sought to destroy Jesus by a frightful death. How should men ponder before they trust every thing to the fickleness and madness of the human heart. The mob is in all ages the same. We should pray against all sudden temptations to wrath. "From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, Good Lord, deliver us."

30. *Passing through the midst of them.* Jesus usually used only the common powers of deliverance that belong to all men. And in this case He may have awed the crowd by the dignity of His mien, or by some word or gesture not mentioned. There seems no reason,

42 And when it was day, he departed, and went into a desert place; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.

44 And he preached in the [a]synagogues of Galilee.

a Mark 1. 39.

CHAPTER V.

AND it came to pass, that as[b] the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genneserat,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would

b Matt. 4. 18; Mark 1. 16.

however, to doubt that in this case He used some Divine power to intimidate them. His hour had not yet come. Before that He shows us, that He could escape when He would, even as at last He chose to deliver Himself up to His enemies. See John viii. 59 and xviii. 6.

31–44. See this explained in notes, Mark i. 21–39.

CHAPTER V.

1. *The people pressed upon H'm.* This was probably after the sermon on the mount, when His fame as a Divine teacher had spread abroad. The Pharisees had not yet taken alarm at His teaching. The common people heard Him gladly, not yet perceiving the self-denial and courage that His doctrines would require of them. Many followed, who afterwards took offence, many who cherished wild dreams of ambition which were afterwards mortified, and many who fell in with the stream, but afterwards yielded to the pressure of circumstances and turned against Him. It is a solemn, but at the same time consoling thought, that the few who followed Jesus with pure hearts were all kept by the power of Divine grace, after the chaff had been blown away. ¶ *By the lake of Gennesaret.* To the north-west of the sea of Galilee lies a fertile valley of some few miles in extent, surrounded by hills, and watered by fountains, called the land of Gennesaret, from which this inland sea took this title. Here was the village of Capernaum. Here Jesus lived with His disciples, and taught and worked miracles. The poor and ignorant people were ready to hear Him. It offered a safe retreat from the malice of His enemies, and became the favored scene of His ministry.

2. *Two ships.* Two boats, suitable for fishing on the lake. The ancients knew nothing of what we call ships. These were small boats, which were endangered by an unusual draught of fish. ¶ *Standing by the lake.* Drawn up on shore, to be safe from the violence of storms

3. *Simon's.* Simon Peter and Andrew followed this occupation at Capernaum. ¶ *Prayed Him.* Desired Him to do it. ¶ *He sat down.* See ch. iv. 20. This was the usual posture of the scribes and rabbis in teaching. The Jews were accustomed to teaching rather than *preaching.* The latter requires one to stand, that he may have full command of all his limbs. Teaching being a more quiet exercise, allows one to sit. Jesus, before any great miracle, generally taught the people, that the miracle might fix upon their minds the truth which He taught. He now teaches the people. Simon listens and muses. Jesus works a miracle, teaching how abundantly He can provide for His own friends, and Simon Peter believes, sees the meaning of the miracle, forsakes all and follows Him. The imagination dwells on this scene with pleasure. The still lake, the attentive crowds on the shore, the eager Simon, the little boat floating calmly in the cove, and Jesus

thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon,[a] Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come

[a] John 21. 6.

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speaking simplest words of mercy and wisdom, such as had never been heard before. How precious the privilege. How sacred to us who believe are the few records of those scenes which remain. Ancient writers seemed to ponder on this scene as turning on that which was said to Simon, "*Henceforth thou shalt catch men.*" Saith Gregory Nazianzen: "Condescending to all, in order that He might draw forth a fish from the deep, i. e. man swimming in the ever-changing scenes and bitter storms of this life."

4. *Launch out.* Put forth toward the middle of the lake, where the water was deeper and the fish more numerous. It may have been an unusual place for finding fish, but the miracle consists more in the great number taken than in the place. ¶ *For a draught.* For a haul of fish.

5. *Master.* St. Matthew uses the word *Lord*, St. Mark, *Teacher*, and St. Luke a word signifying *Master*, or one set over another. ¶ *At Thy word.* Since *You* command it, we will try again. Not discouraged, they renewed their toil. An encouragement to all Christians, that they fail not by unbelief in their wiser, more trying work of "catching souls." Often is prayer answered when the Christian least expects it. Be ever ready to believe and obey at the Divine word.

6. *Their net brake.* The Greek more exactly expresses, it was breaking, was on the point of breaking. A net may part some of the strands, and yet suffice to hold the fish in it, yet it is of course very much weaker. This was the case. They were in danger of losing all, and signalled their companions for help. Nothing could have caused such a draught of fish but the power of the Divine word. The miracle was not against the course of nature, but with it, guiding and controlling it.

7. *He beckoned.* Made signs to them. They were perhaps beyond the reach of the voice.—¶ *Their partners.* James and John. v. 10. Happy were they, that their friendly partnership suffered no loss, but was renewed in their spiritual work of saving sinful men.

8. *When Simon Peter saw it.* Saw this wonderful power over the fish of the sea. ¶ *He fell down at Jesus' knees.* Kneeling is the natural posture for sinners in the presence of a Divine Being. Men may at times properly stand in prayer, but in all confession of sin and supplication for pardon, which Christian prayers should contain, the natural, proper posture is to fall upon the knees. Many a fervor of devotion is lost, by a posture which harmonizes not with the humble tone of the words, and tempts the eyes to wander on surrounding objects. ¶ *Depart from me.* This is not a singular expression of feeling. All good men have experienced the same. The human soul perceives at such times the infinite distance which it has fallen from its original purity, and is humbled in the dust, is oppressed with the nearness of a spiritual being, and dreads to be too closely examined. Manoah feared death for seeing God. Judges xiii. 22. Job said: "But now mine eye seeth Thee, therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job. xlii. 6. Isaiah says the same. Is. vi. 5. So Peter recognized a supernatural power

and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, [a]Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James and John the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

12 ¶ And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man [b]full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus, fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

a 2 Sam. 6. 7; 1 Kings 17. 18, 8. 2; Mark 1. 40. *b* Matt.

13 And he put forth *his* hand and touched him, saying, I will: Be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as [c]Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and [d]great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 ¶ And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

18 ¶ And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken

c Lev. 14. 4; 10. 21, 22. *d* Matt. 4. 25; Mark 3. 7; John 6. 2.

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in Jesus, and was overwhelmed with the startling conviction of the Divine character of his Master. He means by this ejaculation, Depart from me, much the same as the Psalmist, "If Thou, Lord shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, *who shall stand?* But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. How great the mercy that now bids us come boldly to the throne of grace to find help, and not be crushed by despair at the consciousness of our sins.

10. *Thou shalt catch men.* This was the key to the miracle, the lesson which it was meant to teach by visible actions. On a wider sea, and far more troublous and stormy, with the patience, energy, courage and skill which they had acquired in their humbler occupation on the stormy Tiberias, they were to launch out for a more subtle and difficult prey—to catch, by "loving guile," the souls of sinners, and enclose them in the sacred net of the Gospel covenant.

11. *Forsook all.* Forsook their regular occupation, and followed Jesus wherever He went, as His disciples. The actual final forsaking of their temporal goods, happened after Pentecost; when most of them, led by the Spirit, left Judea for Gentile nations. At present it is a forsaking as a *means of living* and by intention. For Peter still had a family at Capernaum, and even till after the Crucifixion, they pursued occasionally their trade, to obtain a supply

with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch, into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? [a]Who can forgive sins but God alone?

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering, said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

a Ps. 32. 5; Is. 43. 25. *b* Matt. 9. 9; Mark 2. 13, 14.

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

27 ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican [a]named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them.

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of food. John xxi. 3. Some are called to give up every thing for the good of others, such as missionaries and often ministers; but the Saviour demands of the body of Christians rather this loosening of their affections from the things of the world.

12–16. See notes, Matt. viii. 2–4: Mark i. 40–45.

17–26. See Matt. ix. 1–8.

17. *To heal them.* Jesus was dwelling in the intervals of His journeys with Peter, so that these various persons knew where to find Him. He was thus engaged on one occasion in teaching, and His power was manifest in doing miracles, to confirm His teaching. He healed the sick who came to Him while He was teaching the Pharisees and others.

20. *Thy sins be forgiven.* See notes, Matt. ix. 2, 5.

27–32. See notes, Matt. ix. 9–13.

Levi, otherwise called Matthew.

29. *Made Him a great feast.* Levi, being summoned by Jesus, seems to have collected his accounts and settled every thing, as was his duty, and freed himself as soon as possible from his business of collector of taxes. This being done, he made a great feast to mark the event, and take leave of his former companions. It was probably some days after his call to be a disciple. His former friends were invited, publicans as they were, and hated by their proud fellow-sinners. Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, accepted the courtesy and partook of the feast. To this the Pharisees object, not to Him but to His disciples. "You are eating with men unclean and defiled. You will be made unclean and be excluded from the temple

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering, said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32 [b]I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

33 ¶ And they said unto him, [a]Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 ¶ And he spake also a parable unto them: No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new, agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved.

39 No man also having drunk old *wine*, straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

CHAPTER VI.

AND it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees

a Matt. 9. 13; 1 Tim. 1. 15.

b Matt. 9. 14; Mark 2. 18.

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and congregation." The disciples are alarmed. But Jesus silences them, and encourages all those who looked to Him for guidance. Jesus lent His countenance to the *innocent social* customs of the Jews. He was at a marriage, where wine was drank, and at more than one feast, not as loving mere animal or social pleasures, but as using them for good. Christians may ponder whether it will not be better for them to indulge their children and dependents in innocent social pleasures, and by their presence regulate and restrain them within due bounds, rather than by a futile attempt to deprive them entirely, expose them to the temptation of deceit in the first instance, and excess in the secret indulgences of youthful animal spirits.

33–39. See this explained in notes, Matt. ix. 14–17.

39. *The old is better.* Wine improves in strength and flavor with age. No one would from choice go from it to new, rough and unfermented wine. Jesus often drew His illustrations from the things before Him. In this instance He implies that no one will go from the better to the worse, from freedom to bondage, of his own choice. The Pharisees wished to bind their superstitious burdens on the disciples. Jesus rejects them, and maintains the liberty of His followers, and gives them a better and freer system. They would be in no danger of forsaking it for the burdens of the law. Having tasted the better covenant, they would never leave it for the worse.

CHAPTER VI.

1–11. See notes, Matt. xii. 1–14.

1. *Second Sabbath after the first.* More exactly following the Greek, we would

said unto them, [a]Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-day?

3 And Jesus answering them, said, Have ye not read so much as this, what[b] David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, which it is not [c]lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, that the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

6 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue, and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered:

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose, and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy *it?*

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

a Ex. 20. 10. *b* 1 Sam. 21. 6. *c* Lev. 24. 9.

say, the *second-first Sabbath.* The words have occasioned some perplexity. We turn to the Jewish customs, and the explanation is easy. On the second day of the Passover, "the morrow after the Sabbath," the "sheaf of the wave-offering" was offered before the Lord. Lev. xxiii. 11. From that day, Sunday, there were seven Sabbaths to be counted to the feast of Pentecost. Lev. xxiii. 15, 16. These Sabbaths counted after that day received names dating from that second day of the Passover, such as St. Luke has tried to express in Greek. It was the seventh day or octave of the great Paschal Sabbath. This day in the second year of our Lord's ministry, we may put down as the 24th Nisan, or April 27. ¶ *Ears of corn.* Barley, not Indian corn. It was the beginning of the barley harvest. Wheat and other grains ripened later. Ex. ix. 31, 32. The labor of rubbing out the grains in their hands was very trifling, yet to that alone the Pharisees objected. The Rabbins called barley food for beasts. See 1 Kings iv. 28. They did not put any value on the grains, but were shocked at the profane labor of rubbing it out!

11. *Filled with madness.* The madness of rage. It blinds the mind, and makes the whole soul as turbid and confused as that of the irrational madman. They would not be taught, nor submit upon conviction, but begin that evil course which landed them in destruction. Jesus answered their objection by perfect, yet simple wisdom. It sometimes happens that the Christian is compelled to oppose the opinions or prejudices of men. Let him learn a double lesson from this example. 1. That he be sure of the truth of his position, and the duty of insisting on it. Fanatics and bigots will be as sure of being right, as the purest and best saints. He must be modest in taking this mantle of his Lord to cover him, lest he err in one of the two points

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 ¶ And when it was day, he [c]called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

14 Simon (whom [b]he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of Alpheus, and Simon, called Zelotes,

16 And Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain; and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast

a Matt. 10.

b John 1. 42.

specified. 2. When there can be no doubt of the truth of his position, and the absolute duty of maintaining it, then let him copy after the meekness and simplicity of his Master. How gentle, quiet, simple, was Jesus when He was saying those things which made His enemies rave with passion around Him. ¶ *Communed.* Conspired. Began to form plans to injure Jesus.

12. *All night in prayer.* Some would render these words "all night in a proseucha," i. e. an oratory or place of prayer. But it comes to the same, since He remained there for prayer. The Jews built oratories for prayer in convenient places, sometimes on the seaside or on mountains. There may have been one consecrated by some pious person in the mountains near Capernaum, and sanctified by memories of some of the saints or prophets of old. But the words in either case teach us that Jesus before this solemn event of choosing the twelve, who were to begin the ceaseless line of a Christian ministry and Church,—one of the most lasting events of His life in its visible effects on the world—spent a night in the most solemn exercises of devotion. It was no common prayer. He sought solitude, darkness and watching, that He might lay the foundations of His Church deep in faithful, earnest prayer and communion with God—a Church which is to flourish and be edified by similar prayer in its members. Two considerations press upon us in meditating on this fact. 1. Our duty in all the events of peculiar interest to the Church or ourselves, to set apart peculiar seasons of special prayer. We must often be content with short prayers, but not *always*. A Christian may have the spirit of prayer at times without the letter, but not long. Set aside, then, times of prayer. Meet great changes of life with special prayer. Are you to be engaged in new business, new relations, go on journeys, or be peculiarly exposed to temptation, then pray. Anticipate by this previous calling on God the dangers of the way. It is said of the pious Richard Hooker, that every Friday taking the keys of his parish Church from his sexton, he entered it alone and spent the day in prayer and fasting. 2. On the similar occasion, when the number of the ministry is to be increased, and new and untried men to be sent out to undertake the responsible work of declaring the everlasting Gospel, then should the whole Church bear them in prayer before God. Let the zeal now shown in increasing difficulties and party spirit, be spent in prayer to God for *faithful ministers*, and the Church will soon feel the blessed change. The *Ember-weeks*, are the four seasons of the year fixed for Ordinations. The fasts are appointed in them. Let all unite to keep them praying for the Bishops and the ordained. And they who are studying for Holy Orders should set apart seasons of meditation and prayer, for themselves,

of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went [a]virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, [b]Blessed *be ye* poor; for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 [c]Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. [d]Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 [e]Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they

a Mark 5. 30; Ch. 8. 46. *b* Matt. 5. 3; Jas. 2. 15. *c* Is. 55. 1; & 65. 13. *d* Is. 61. 3. *e* 1 Pet. 2. 19; & 3. 14; & 4. 14.

for strength and grace, according to their needs.

13–16. See notes, Matt. x. 1–4.

17. *And stood in the plain.* On a level place, of high *table*-land, probably on the summit of a hill. The word does not imply *low* land, but only a level place, such as might contain the crowd which was assembled. After these miracles He may have gone upon an eminence near and taught the people. Some would introduce here the Sermon on the Mount. But that, if a single discourse, was delivered before this period. It is more natural under the circumstances, to believe that the two Evangelists have brought together such truths as they could remember in the teaching of our Lord, and which He had taught at the times specified. Otherwise their inspiration would be a series of miracles, and thus lead us into other and more serious difficulties. They give us two discourses, differing as they well may, since they come from two or more separate witnesses, yet with likeness enough to prove their common origin. If they have given the same identical sermon, and been miraculously guided to recall every exact word, then how can they differ in any word? But believing that they have written, as men usually write, with honest, intelligent purpose to give a faithful narrative of the works and words of Jesus; believing also that the Holy Spirit so wrought in them "to will and to do," by unusual power, so as to *preserve them from error*, we have the safest and most intelligible view of their inspiration that we can receive. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon.* See Matt. xi. 21.

18. *Vexed.* Tormented, or driven about without purpose. Those afflicted after this sort, had no control of themselves, but were driven to do evil and foolish things, filled with senseless fury and often laying violent hands on themselves. ¶ *Unclean spirits.* Evil spirits, devils, who were wicked and unclean, and made any one so, who yielded to their suggestions.

20–49. See the similar teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v.–viii.

21. *That hunger now.* The earnest desire of the soul for pardon, peace, and purity, is likened to hunger. They who have such desires after righteousness will not rest satisfied until by faith and obedience they obtain mercy. ¶ *Who weep now.* Because the mortification of our worldly ambition and affections, ought to work in us repentance toward God. They who weep for sin are truly blessed, because they are in the way of hating and rejecting it.

24–26. These verses are not found in St. Matthew's Gospel. They are in the same style as other teachings of Christ, being the necessary, reverse side of the former blessings. The Gospel is a savor of life to those who believe; of death to those who refuse. 2 Cor. ii. 16. ¶ *Who are rich.* In the sense given by St. James, ii. 6, 7; and v. 1–6. They whose riches have possession of their hearts, who live voluptuously and forget God. ¶ *That are full.* Have no desire beyond the gra-

shall [a]separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice [b]ye in that day, and leap for joy: for behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in [c]the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But wo unto you that are [d]rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25 Wo [e]unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. [f]Wo unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

a John 16. 2. *b* Acts 5. 41; Col. 1. 24; Jas. 1. 2. *c* Acts 7. 51. *d* Amos 6. 1; Jas. 5. 1. *e* Is. 65. 13. *f* Ps. 14. 13.

26 Wo unto you, [g]when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 ¶ [h]But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them which curse you, and [i]pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh[j] away thy cloak, forbid not *to take thy* coat also.

30 [k]Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that

g 1 John 4. 5. *h* Ex. 23. 4; Prov. 25. 2 Rom. 12. 20. *i* Ch. 23. 34; Acts 7. 60. *j* 1 Cor 6. 7. *k* Deut. 15. 7, 8, 10; Prov. 21. 26.

tification of the body. How evil a thing is wealth, when it pampers the heart and shuts out all the objects of spiritual good. How many calling themselves Christians are living in luxury and cannot see their danger. God mercifully at times removes the burdens of wealth and pleasure, and they wonder that they did not see before that they were too full of the world to seek eagerly after heaven. ¶ *Ye shall hunger.* When your idols, worldly ease and luxury, are removed. Abraham in the other world did not charge Dives with crimes, but with being satisfied with wealth, and deliberately choosing to receive his portion on the earth. "Thou receivedst good things in thy lifetime—and rested in them, Lazarus evil things, and looked beyond them; now he is comforted for his faith's sake, and thou art tormented because of thy sensuality." Luke xvii. 25. ¶ *That laugh now.* With the laughter of fools, trifling levity and jollity. The Bible nowhere condemns innocent mirth. But no mirth is innocent that keeps us from serious things. ¶ *Shall mourn and weep.* A time was rapidly coming of this kind to the hearers. And over all men, time flies and brings the day when these changes will happen, and the foolish, the worldly and trifling will weep over a misspent life. Reader! on which side are you now standing? Which word, *Blessed* or *Woe*, is unto you? Read not in vain, seek now that penitence over sin, that serious search for eternal life, which may give you peace of conscience now, and happiness hereafter. Religion will sweetly mingle with and sanctify the pleasures of an innocent life. Her ways are pleasantness and peace. The end is joy for ever.

26. *When all men shall speak well of you.* The world often tempted the Apostles to compromise and join with the Gospel other doctrines, taken from existing religions. Church history is one continual picture of the efforts of this kind. Heresies are the result of such unions. And almost all heresies promise the poor, deluded soul, *popularity*. The Jews would have given the Apostles great praise, if they would have taught Judaism with Christianity. The heathen Romans would never have persecuted Christianity, if it had consented to be one among equal systems. Such as were frightened among the Christians fell into error, by being unwilling to be unpopular. The same rule holds still.

taketh away thy goods, ask *them* not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and [a]lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest:

a Ps. 37. 26. *b* Prov. 19. 17. *c* Ps. 79. 12.

for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38 [b]Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your [c]bosom. For with the same measure that [d]ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable unto them; Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one [‖]that is perfect, shall be as his master.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's

d Jas. 2. 13. ‖ Or, *shall be perfected as his master*.

But, alas, for the system and the man who seeks to guide his course by the applause of men! God will work out the truth of this woe, both here and hereafter. ¶ *False prophets.* Men falsely claiming to speak from Jehovah. Some of them were deceivers, some were deluded by evil spirits. Popular as they were at times, yet their history is a sad one. Only the *truth* can make one peaceful and prosperous to the last. These woes spoken by Jesus are not taken by chance. They are incorporated in the laws of Providence, and are much more visible in the kingdom of grace. Riches, satiety, levity, evil applause, are woes to the soul. Penitence, chastening, seriousness, and humility, give it true peace.

27, 28. See Matt. v. 44, 45.
29. Matt. v. 39, 40.
30. Matt. v. 42.
31. Matt. vii. 12.
32–36. Matt. v. 46–48.

37–42. Matt. vii. 1–9.

38. *Into your bosom.* The Jews carried small articles in the folds of the large loose dresses which they wore. These being girt around the waist were convenient for such purposes. Ps. lxxix. 12. They who are fair and generous in their opinions and dealings with others, shall receive the same judgment and treatment in return. God has so made us, that we may rely upon these promises of compensation.

39. *Parable.* See Matt. xv. 14.

40. *The disciple is not above his master.* The Christian must be made perfect as his Master was, being inferior to Him in all respects. If any thing in the Christian life seems hard to be endured, we must remember that Christ Himself has endured all and worse before us. See Heb. xii. 3, 4; ii. 10; Phil. ii. 5–8. ¶ *Every one that is perfect.* Every one who is completely built up in the Chris-

eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, [a]cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes.

45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

[a] Prov. 18. 17. ‖ Or, *a grape.*

46 ¶ And why [b]call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like.

48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

CHAPTER VII.

NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's

[b] Mal. 1. 6.

tian doctrine and graces shall be subjected to the same spiritual discipline as the Master experienced. The disciples were warned that they were to expect the same difficulties, which Jesus was then opposing. His life not only shows us how we are to walk, but what discipline we ought to expect. Some believers may escape great trials, but all should ponder the rule, that if any one is "without chastisement whereof all are partakers," he is not to be envied. Heb. xii. 8.

43, 44. See Matt. vii. 16–18.

45. See Matt. xii. 35.

46–49. See Matt. vii. 21–27.

47. *Heareth My sayings and doeth them.* "But lay your foundations upon a rock; that is, lean upon the faith of Christ, so as to persevere immovable in adversity, whether it come from man or God."—*St. Basil.* "Or the foundation of the house is the resolution to live a good life, which the perfect hearer firmly lays in fulfilling the commandments of God."—*Ven. Bede.*

CHAPTER VII.

1–10. See notes, Matt. viii. 5–13.

3. *He sent unto Him the elders of the Jews.* These were chief persons of the place, probably elders of the synagogue which the centurion had built. St. Matthew seems at first sight to differ from this account. He represents the centurion as coming in person to make this request. But we may understand him as writing according to the common rules of all languages, that any one is said to do that himself, which he does

servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, that he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto ‖one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the

‖ Greek, *this man*.

by another. A messenger speaks as a person sending him. There are instances of this in the Old Testament. See Ex. xviii. 6; 1 Kings v. 7. People of a vivid imagination will constantly fall into this way of speaking.

11. *A city called Nain.* A small village in Galilee, about fifty miles north of Jerusalem, and near Mount Tabor. It was of course near to Capernaum. It is now a hamlet called Nein. The brook Kishon passes near it.

12. *A dead man carried out.* On the way to burial. The dead were unclean according to the law of Moses. Lev. xxi. 1, &c.; Numb. v. 2, 3. They were accordingly buried, for the most part, outside the walls of towns, in some retired spot where they would be safe and undisturbed. Tombs were commonly hewn out in the sides of rocks and hills, and protected by a large stone laid against the entrances of them. On coming to such places with a body, they address those who lie there as if still alive. "Blessed be the Lord who hath created you, fed you, brought you up, and at last in His justice taken you out of the world. He knows the number of you all, and will in due time receive you. Blessed be the Lord who causeth death, and restoreth life." They often made a funeral oration over the dead, then passed round him uttering a prayer, which began with Deut. xxx. 4. The body was let down into the grave, the mourners saying, "Go in peace." The nearest relations threw earth on the coffin, and afterwards all those present, and retired. The Jews were commendably careful concerning their cemeteries. They built places of prayer near them, and scrupulously guarded them from any disturbance. In this care there is need that Christians should emulate their example.

14. *Touched the bier.* That He might stop the bearers. It was an open frame borne on men's shoulders, on which the body was laid, with a cloth or cloak spread over it. ¶ *I say unto*

only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the ‖bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, [a]Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak: and he delivered him to his mother.

‖ Or, *coffin.*

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up amongst us; and, That God has visited his people.

17 And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 ¶ And John, calling *unto him* two of his disciples, sent *them*

[a] John 11. 43; Acts 9. 40; Rom. 4. 17.

thee, arise. This was the word of Divine power. There are seven instances of restoration to life recorded in Scripture. The child of the widow of Sarepta (1 Kings xvii. 21, 22), of the Shunamite (2 Kings iv. 33, &c.), both recalled by prayer. The case of a man raised by touching Elisha's bones (2 Kings xiii. 21), was without any word. Jesus raised three persons to this *mortal* life by His word; this youth, Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus, and many bodies of the saints, by His death. Matt. xxvii. 52. St. Peter recalled Tabitha by prayer. Acts ix. 40. Our Lord's resurrection differs from all these. These men died again. He dies no more, but has everlasting life, such as His followers will have at the general resurrection.

17. *And this rumor.* The account of this surprising miracle—that He should, with a word, recall the dead to life. ¶ *Throughout all Judea.* Or Palestine, wherever Jews were at the time. This was a natural consequence of the great crowds which were then accompanying Him. v. 11. These crowds, both of disciples and others who attended Jesus, were all witnesses. There could not have been a more open miracle. One crowd followed Jesus, another the bier. The latter knew the young man to be dead, the former could not doubt it, from beholding the preparation to bury him. The mother was following, bowed down with sorrow. The gate of the city was just passed on their way to the last resting-place of her child, and suddenly Jesus meets her. She has no right to call upon Him, knows not why He bids her be comforted, pauses to wonder at His gesture in stopping the sad procession, when suddenly she hears that voice, *Arise*, and beholds her son, the pride and comfort of her declining years, once more alive, and manifests by unmistakable signs her fervent joy. The compassion, the command, betray a Saviour and a Divine being, and the astonished crowd are equally divided between delight and fear—one part saying, "A great prophet, a second Elijah or Elisha is risen up among us;" the other responding, "God has visited His people: this is something beyond what any prophet has dreamed of." That scene preludes another. That voice, "Arise," will yet sound in the ears of all the dead, and the earth and the sea shall give up their dead, and all men will rise to judgment. For Christ shall "descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. iv. 16. May we be ready then to meet Him in peace, who will be as gentle to His people as He was to the poor widow of Nain. Let us now walk as He walked, and die to sin and rise again unto righteousness.

19–35. See notes, Matt. xi. 2–19.

29. *And all the people, &c.* This and

to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the [a]blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 ¶ And [b]when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, [c]Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being [d]baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers ‖rejected the counsel of God ‖against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 ¶ And the Lord said,

a Is. 35. 5. *b* Matt. 11. 7. *c* Mal. 3. 1. *d* Matt. 3. 5; Ch. 3. 12. ‖ Or, *frustrated*. ‖ Or, *within themselves*.

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the next verse are supposed by many, to be the words of the Saviour, not of the Evangelist. This was the effect of John's preaching. The common people and publicans heard him and believed; the wealthy and learned refused him. ¶ *Justified God.* This word is opposed to the word *rejected* in the next verse. They received the message, and glorified God as just and good in thus calling them to repentance by John. ¶ *Being baptized.* That is, by submitting to the baptism of John, they showed their faith in him as a messenger from God. God justifies us when He forgives and blots out our sins, and esteems us as in favor with Him, giving us grace to continue so; and all, for the merits of Christ. We justify Him when doing His commands, and receiving His free grace; we praise Him for His mercy, in our hearts by love, and in our lives by obedience.

30. *The counsel of God.* They refused and nullified the merciful design in sending to them John to call them to repentance. No man can frustrate the will of God, beyond that which God leaves freely in his power. He will have all men to be saved. He will not *force* those to believe and love Him, who refuse. He offered salvation freely to the Jews. The publicans and the poor accepted John, the Pharisees and law-

Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But Wisdom is justified of all her children.

a Matt. 3. 4. Mark 1. 6.

36 ¶ And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

27 And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him, saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying,

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yers rejected him. God gives men power to choose between life and death. ¶ *Against themselves.* To their own injury or loss. The counsel was not against them, but their rejecting it was against their own good.

31–35. See notes, Matt. xi. 16–19.

31. *And the Lord said.* After He had spoken as above, He again spake, as if in astonishment at the conduct of the leaders of the Jewish people. These words, however, are omitted by some manuscripts and critics.

36. *One of the Pharisees.* Simon. v. 40. Nothing is known of him. It is ingeniously suggested that he had been healed of some not *very* serious complaint by Jesus, and with some gratefulness towards Him, had given this invitation. Having some, but very little faith, he had neglected his guest. ¶ *Sat down to meat.* The Orientals reclined generally at their feasts, around the tables, upon couches. Thus the feet were in reach of any one standing on the outside, near the walls of the room, while the servants passed on the inner side of the tables. Often during their meals strangers came into the room, and remained unquestioned, listening to the conversation of the guests.

37. *In the city.* This narrative is to be carefully distinguished from the accounts given, Matt. xxvi. 7, and Mark xiv. 3. A year or more separated them. The circumstances are different, as also the third similar event related John xii. 3. ¶ *Which was a sinner.* A depraved person, an abandoned, notorious evil liver. She had been a sinner, but, as is supposed, had been healed of some disease by Jesus, and came to this place to show Him her gratitude. ¶ *An alabaster box.* See note, Mark xiv. 3.

38. *Stood at His feet.* See note, Matt. xxiii. 6. Stood at the outside of the couch on which He reclined. ¶ *Began to wash His feet.* The Jews washed their feet after walking, and especially before meals. It was the duty of a courteous host to furnish his guests with means of washing; a courtesy very agreeable in a hot and dusty climate, especially as their feet were only partially covered by their sandals.

This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed ‖five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I

‖ See Matt. 18. 28.

Simon had neglected to do this; foolishly shamefaced before his other friends. This woman, filled with the tenderest penitence and gratitude, came to the presence of Jesus. Possibly beholding this neglect, as well as pressed down with shame for her past sins, she wept bitterly and sought to manifest to Him her love in the manner described. As her tears fell upon His feet, she wiped them with the rich tresses of her hair, thus appearing to do the work of a servant. ¶ *Kissed them.* A traveller in Abyssinia relates that the servants wash the feet of a master, dry them upon their clothes, and then lifting the left one in their hands, kiss it. Among the Jews the kiss was common upon the face, as a sign of love. How lowly her mind, and how true her conversion from a life of sin, who could thus take a servant's place. She had been proud, and she kneels at her Saviour's feet; hard-hearted, she breaks down with bitter, tender weeping; sinful, and she lets all men behold her sorrow, while she pours over His feet the wealth "her day of luxury stored." "Her eyes, which once coveted earthly things, are now wearing out with penitential weeping. She once displayed her hair for setting off her face, she now wiped her tears with her hair. She once uttered proud things with her mouth, but kissing the feet of her Lord, she impressed her lips on the footsteps of her Redeemer. She once used ointment for the perfume of her body; what she had so unworthily applied to herself, she now laudably offered to God. She converts the number of her faults into the same number of virtues, that as much of her might wholly serve God in her penitence, as had despised God in her sin."—*St. Gregory.*

39. *Within himself.* Not aloud. ¶ *If He were a prophet.* It was natural for him, according to the opinions of his people, to suppose that a prophet, being in favor with God, and receiving special revelations of the future from Him, should be possessed also of supernatural knowledge in respect to a case like this. He judged the woman according to the tenor of her past life, to be a sinner and an unclean person, one whose touch would defile a righteous man. The Pharisee was shocked. Jesus, on the other hand, judged her mercifully by her repentance and humility, and looked at her heart, which was then right towards God. If we suppose Simon to have been healed of some disease by Jesus, we behold a picture of weak faith struggling against false opinions and worldly pride. He imagines that circumstance, which his previous opinions rendered strange, to be a proof that the one who had conferred a benefit upon him was no prophet. How then had Jesus cured him? Why not with a docile spirit have asked an explanation? ¶ *That toucheth Him.* Persons who were careless of the law, would probably touch any thing and do many things, which would make them ceremonially unclean. Hence to touch them was considered polluting. Lev. v. 2. See Matt. ix. 11.

41. *And Jesus answering, said.* Jesus answers the thoughts of the Pharisee, thus showing him that He knew what was passing in his mind. ¶ *Five hundred pence.* About 70 dollars. See

suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and

a Ps. 23. 5.

wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 Mine head with [a]oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

Matt. xviii. 28. ¶ *Fifty.* About 7 dollars.

42. *Frankly forgave them both.* Remitted their debts. This parable delicately and exactly runs a parallel between the conduct of this generous creditor and his debtors, and the conduct of Jesus and the two persons concerned; Simon and the female. Simon was the one supposing himself the less indebted to the power of Jesus; the woman confessed by her tears of penitence the great love she had towards Him who had called her from her sins by His merciful cure of her, either in body or in soul. Both had *nothing to pay*, nothing besides their gratitude to offer. That of Simon was cold, calculating, and cavilling: that of the woman was humble, sensitive, and entire. We too are debtors to God. See note, Matt. vi. 12. Our sins are debts, drafts on His mercy, which we have no means of paying. No man can purify his own soul before God. Rom. iii. 20. The Lord freely pardons. Rom. iii. 24. The true, spiritual Christian, like the woman, feels His infinite mercy with corresponding gratitude. The doubting, feeble Christian is ever ready to disparage His mercy, or to cavil at the means of His salvation. "Our love to God is proportional to our sense of His forgiveness."

43. *I suppose.* Simon answers fairly. It condemns his own conduct. He does not seem to have been wilfully wrong, but rather weak and doubting. He had some love, but it was feeble.

44. *Seest thou this woman?* Look at her, and judge as fairly in the case to which the parable applies. Judge not as a misguided Pharisee, but as a man, standing before a prophet of God and conscious of his relations to the Almighty, as a sinner before Him. ¶ *I entered thine house.* Not hers. You as a host invited me here. You had duties to perform to me, the courtesies usual in this case. She had no such duties. ¶ *Thou gavest Me no water, &c.* It is the custom among the Arabs at this day to bring water, and wash the feet of guests, whom they wish to honor. They have retained it from the very earliest period. See Gen. xviii. 4; Judges xix. 21.

45. *No kiss.* This was the common mode of salutation. The master of the house thus received his guests one after another. So that Simon had betrayed a foolish shame in omitting it. See note, Matt. xxvi. 48. ¶ *To kiss My feet.* That which no duty of hospitality required of her, she has done. If she had felt as Simon did, she would have kept away from Jesus, and lost the blessing. But in her heart were all the proofs of true, sincere faith; and no false pride to restrain her. She believed and loved; and from the depths of the shame in which her sinful life had left her, she felt no fear of what man would say or do to her. Exalted position, wealth, reputation for learning, often make cowardly Christians of us. Men and their sayings are too much regarded, and blind our eyes to the great and simple truths of the faith. To lose sight of vain, worldly maxims, is to become as a little child—self-forgetful and confiding.

46. *Mine head with oil.* The Orientals used oil, prepared carefully with sweet spices, to soften and refresh the skin of the head. Climate and manners

47 [a]Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

a 1 Tim. 1. 14.

49 And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith[b] hath saved thee; go in peace.

b Matt. 9. 22; Mark 5. 34; & 10. 52; Ch. 8. 48; & 18. 42.

vary the world over. To furnish guests with this refreshment was customary in Judea. The Jews used it, particularly on days of festivity. Ps. xxiii. 5; xlv. 7; Is. lxi. 3. ¶ *With ointment.* In the dry, dusty climate of Palestine, the use of unguents for anointing the skin of the body was almost a necessity of nature. The Jews prepared their ointments carefully, with olive oil and aromatics, and used them freely, especially after bathing. Bathing removed all impurities, but left the skin dry and hot. To remedy this, the "ointment of the apothecary," as Solomon calls it (Ecc. x. 1), was used. It was often made costly, by the quality of the materials.

47. *Wherefore I say unto thee.* She who has shown her love in such a positive manner, received the reward of it. First the body, then the soul, was cured. She had been grateful for the one, she now has the other. Simon had been intimidated by the world's opinion, and neglected Jesus, showing that he had but little faith and no love, and is in turn passed by. Simon had cavilled at her touching Jesus because she was a sinner. Her conduct had manifested that this sin was repented of. A spiritual mind would have felt that true repentance could be received, as a testimony of pardon. Now she is made no longer a *sinner*, in the sense which Simon had intended. Her sins were pardoned in *form*, as they had before been in *deed*, and therefore she is *clean*. Ps. li. 6, 7. ¶ *For she loved much.* She has manifested a true and sincere gratitude for the favor already received (either some cure which impressed her mind and arrested her in her sinful course, or a conversion of mind from sin, by hearing the teaching of Jesus); and as God gives freely, but founds that gift on the conduct of the receiver, therefore, as she has been faithful in a little, now she receives the consummation of it in the open pardon of her sins. Love, in a spiritual sense, or as a fruit of regeneration, does not precede, but follows forgiveness. Still love, as an offering of the spirit of man, must attend the first offer of faith and repentance. For love is the desire for the favor of God, felt as soon as that favor is believed to be possible. And faith, penitence, love, in this sense go before the act of pardon, as a precedent *sine qua non*. So with the alms and prayers of Cornelius (Acts x. 4), and the prayers of the Gentile woman. Matt. xv. 28. They did not *merit*, they received the further grace desired. And in this manner, this woman's love did not *merit* pardon, but was that in her, upon which her forgiveness proceeded. There is no need to alter the translation, as some propose on weak grounds. The sense is too valuable to be tampered with, and the most natural force of the words is the best. ¶ *To whom little is forgiven.* This cannot happen in our case, for all sins are great and destructive before God. But as they are graduated in our eyes by their consequences, and may be greater in number, and with increase of wickedness in the person; so our Lord here contrasts them. Simon, if healed of some lesser trouble of body or ignorance of mind, or relieved of some vexed question of conscience by Jesus, may have been partly moved to believe in Him, and favored as he believed, i. e. only a little. But as he had no spiritual insight into his case and his need of farther pardon, he had little gratitude and love. The sacred golden rule of pardon

CHAPTER VIII.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him,

2 And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susan-

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reads, "Great is thy faith; be it unto thee *even as thou wilt.*" And again, "All things are possible to him that believeth."

48. *Thy sins are forgiven.* See note, Matt. ix. 2–6. No man can forgive sins, for forgiveness proceeds from God only. As Jesus claimed this power of His own right, He established His claim to be the Son of God. And that men may not grope in darkness in this important matter, He has constituted the whole system of revealed religion in such a manner, as that all who truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel, may have full and comforting assurance of their pardon.

49. *They that sat at meat.* Persons who had joined the feast, probably Pharisees. They, whose presence had evidently been the secret of Simon's conduct.

50. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* It has been the reason in thee, why I have freely saved you, *by grace not merit.* ¶ *Go in peace.* He comforts her, against the rude looks and cavils of the persons about them.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Every city and village.* Jesus being now in the second year of His ministry, spent the time after Pentecost, in visiting on a second circuit, the whole of Galilee, probably until the following feast of Tabernacles in October. ¶ *The twelve.* The disciples. This was mentioned to distinguish it from another circuit, when the disciples were not with Him. Matt. ix. 35.

2. *Infirmities.* Sicknesses. ¶ *Mary called Magdalene.* She seems to have been a wealthy lady of the town of Magdala, in Galilee. See Matt. xv. 39. She had been delivered by Christ from the possession of evil spirits; afterwards attended Him; was present at the crucifixion, and brought spices after His death to embalm His body. She first beheld the Saviour after His resurrection, and conveyed the news of it to the disciples. Many ancient writers will have her to be the penitent spoken of in the preceding chapter. Most modern commentators are of a different opinion. ¶ *Out of whom went.* Jesus had healed her. This violent possession by evil spirits, was consistent with a respectable life. They may have manifested their presence by wild cries and madness, instead of vices. Ascetics and solitaries were often afflicted in this manner. From a forbidden search after wisdom, or for bodily severities, they fled to caves and deserts, and there became wild fanatics, and finally possessed by demons. Inspiration alone can tell us how to mark and number such supernatural laws. The whole subject lies now beyond our comprehension.

3. *Herod's steward.* These women we suppose of some rank in life. Herod's steward was either his deputy over a province, or the chief steward of his household. This was Herod Antipas. ¶ *Of their substance.* Furnished the company with such things as were necessary. St Jerome mentions, that "it was a Jewish custom, nor was it thought blamable, according to the ancient manners of that nation, that women should afford of their substance and their clothing to their teachers." St. Paul is supposed to allude to the same. 1 Cor. ix. 15. Jesus, as Lord of all, had no need of this help. Still, as the Son of man He accepted it, that He might live on earth even as His followers must live, by means. He gave to those who could not by their sex serve Him as ministers of the Word, the power to

na, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables, [a]that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 Now the [b]parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way-side, are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns, are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 ¶ No man, when he hath [c]lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known, and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which [‖]he seemeth to have.

19 ¶ Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

20 And it was told him *by certain*, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said

a Is. 6. 9; Mark 4. 12. *b* Matt. 13. 18; Mark 4. 14. *c* Matt. 5. 15; Mark 4. 21; Ch. 11. 33. ‖ Or, *thinketh that he hath.*

serve Him as effectually in a lower sphere. Female Christians, by words or deeds of charity to the sick and afflicted, may minister effectually to the

unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 ¶ And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him, that he would not command them to go out [a]into the deep.

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see

[a] Rev. 20. 3.

Saviour, and "adorn themselves, as becometh women professing godliness, *with good works*. 1 Tim. ii. 10.

4–15. See notes, Matt. xiii. 3–20; Mark iv. 3–20.

16–18. See Matt. xiii. 24–52; Mark iv. 21–34.

19–21. See Matt. xii. 46–50; Mark iii. 31–35.

22–39. See Matt. viii. 23–27: Mark iv. 35–41 and v. 1–20.

40. See Matt. ix. 1; Mark v. 21.

41–56. See Matt. ix. 18–26; Mark v. 22–43. These passages are more

what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it*, told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 ¶ Then [a]the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about, [b]besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now [c]the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 ¶ And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house.

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went, the people thronged him.

43 ¶ [d]And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind *him* and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter, and they that were with him, said, Master, the multitude throng *thee*, and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 ¶ While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear

a Matt. 8. 34. *b* Acts 16. 39. *c* Mark 5. 18. *d* Matt. 9. 20.

largely explained in the notes to St. Matthew's Gospel.

CHAPTER IX.

1–6. See Matt. ix. 36—xi. 1; Mark vi. 7–13.

7–9. See Matt. xiv. 1–12; Mark vi. 14–29.

10–17. See Matt. xiv. 13–21; Mark vi. 31–44; John vi. 1–13.

10. *Bethsaida.* See note, Matt. xi.

not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not: she is not dead, [a]but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, [b]arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he [c]charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

CHAPTER IX.

THEN he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 And he sent them to [d]preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very [e]dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

a John 11. 11, 13. *b* Ch. 7. 14; John 11. 43. *c* Matt. 8. 4; & 9. 30; Mark 5. 43.

d Matt. 10. 7, &c.; Mark 6. 12. *e* Acts 13. 51.

21. Palestine is peculiar in the fact, that there are no suburbs to the towns. Within a short distance of any of them, a traveller would not imagine them to

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 (For they were about five thousand men.) And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 And it [a]came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering, said, John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing,

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 ¶ And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man [b]advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26 For whosoever [c]shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God.

28 ¶ And it came to pass, about an eight days after these [d]sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fash-

a Matt. 16. 13; Mark 8. 27. *b* Matt. 16. 26; Mark 8. 36. *c* Matt. 10. 33; 2 Tim. 2. 12. ‖ Or, *things*.

be near. It was at this part of our Lord's ministry, that His disciples and others were agitating the question of making Him king. It was in the spring or winter before the Third Passover.

18–20. See notes, Matt. xvi. 13–28; Mark viii. 27 to end.

20. *The Christ of God.* That anointed Person of whom the prophets spake such glorious things. Flashes of the true power of Jesus were coming upon the vision of this disciple; but the temporal kingdom was yet the great idea that filled his mind.

28–36. See explanation. Matt. xvii. 1–13; Mark ix. 2–13. This was ten days before Pentecost, and, therefore, exactly one year before the Ascension.

ion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were [a]heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* [b]close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 ¶ And it came to pass, that on the [c]next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

39 And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and

a Dan. 8. 18; & 10. 9. *b* Matt. 17. 9. *c* Matt. 17. 14; Mark 9. 14. 17.

¶ *About an eight days.* St. Matthew says *six days.* One counts in the two days of the extremes, the other only the whole days between. ¶ *Went up into a mountain to pray.* Our Lord entered on all His great works with prayer. In the hour of His great glory, in that of His severest trial, He was found praying. How much more should we pray without ceasing!

29. *Glistering.* Exceedingly resplendent, "as white as the light," "so as no fuller on earth could white them." He appeared in all the perfections of the glorified saints.

31. *In glory.* St. Peter called it in his epistle, "The excellent glory." 2 Pet. i. 17. It is believed, therefore, to have been the same glorious appearance, which was first seen by Adam, afterwards by Moses, and then in the Shechinah of the tabernacle. ¶ *Of His decease.* Of His sufferings and death, and the work of redemption then procured. That which men mourn over, often angels and saints see working a good that swallows up the pain. Here the saints Moses and Elijah do not call the painful end of the Saviour a death, but an *exodus, a departure* out of a scene of humiliation to the land of everlasting rest. The same word is used of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. ¶ *Which He should accomplish.* They say *accomplish*, not *suffer*. His decease was the end of a holy work, was *voluntary*, and predetermined in the council of heaven. Acts iv. 28.

32. *Heavy with sleep.* They were weary with watching. They could not continue in prayer for weariness of body, and their minds were not yet truly enlightened by the mysteries of grace then passing before them. They did not see the beginning of the vision.

35. *Hear Him.* Moses said in Deut. xviii. 15: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto *Him ye shall hearken.*"

it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering, said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink [a]down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 ¶ And John answered[b] and said, Master, we saw one casting

a Matt. 17. 22.

b Matt. 9. 38; Num. 11. 27–30.

36. *Was found alone.* Without these saintly attendants, and the supernatural glory.

37–43. See notes, Matt. xvii. 14–21; Mark ix. 14–29.

44. *Let these sayings.* This was afterward. Jesus took them aside, and gave them solemn warning not to forget His own sayings concerning His death, which was near. The disciples seeing His power and success with the multitude, and clinging to the notion of an earthly kingdom, could not be warned, nor comprehend the things spoken of death. They must have regarded them as words of strange despondency. Often we cling to our prejudices and blind our eyes to the plain truths of the Scriptures. Not all who read the Bible are able to see "wonderful things in the law." It needs the docile and childlike mind to be truly wise in sacred things.

45. *It was hid from them.* It was not hid by any act of God, but by their own prejudices. They heard Jesus speak of death. They did not believe that the Messiah was to die before conquering the world. They had no idea of a spiritual kingdom, begun in a cross; by which men would conquer death and sin. They thought rather of tented fields and all the glorious array of war, the spoils of conquest and the fruits of peace. So while Jesus warned them, their minds were in such a state as to be filled with wonder, not with instruction.

46–50. See explanation in notes, Matt. xviii. 1–6; Mark ix. 33–40.

51. *Should be received up.* Into heaven. The word is used of the ascension of Christ into the presence of God. Acts i. 11–22; Mark xvi. 19. The verse teaches us that from this point in the ministry of Jesus, He manifested plainly a sense of His coming death. That period now drew near. His warnings to the disciples showed a preparation of them for it. He turned His journeys henceforth toward the city. Jesus was

out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us, is for us.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received [a] up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went and entered into the village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not [b] receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, [c] even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

a Mark 16. 19; Acts 1. 2.

b John 4. 4, 9. *c* 2 Kings 1. 10, 12.

at this time in the northern parts of Palestine. Bede says: "Let, then, the heathen cease to mock the Crucified as if He were a man, who it is plain as God, both foresaw the time of His crucifixion, and going voluntarily to be crucified, sought with steadfast face, that is, with resolute and undaunted mind, the spot where He was to be crucified." ¶ *He steadfastly set His face.* He now made every thing point thither. We are not to suppose by this that Jesus went directly to Jerusalem, but that He now did all things, guided His journeys, sent out His disciples, and instructed them, in view of the quick-coming end of His work. Thus in *spirit* He was steadfastly bent on that one object, to work in the brief time left Him on earth.

52. *He sent messengers before His face.* He was going up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Pentecost (in May) and no longer travels secretly; but foreseeing all the malicious designs of His enemies, He comes up openly, sends disciples before Him, to make ready for Him, that any and all may know of His movements. ¶ *To make ready.* To find a house and obtain provisions. He had, for the most part, avoided the Samaritans, as persons on a level with the Gentiles, on account of their heresies; but now He seems to give them opportunity to receive or reject Him. On a previous passage through their land many had believed on Him. John iv. 41 42. The people seeing these messengers, and hearing from them of the coming of Jesus, had time to assemble and decide whether to receive Him. ¶ *Samaritans.* See notes, Matt. x. 5.

53. *They did not receive Him.* They determined not to listen to Him, nor to extend to Him the rites of hospitality; from their hostility to the Jews. John iv. 9. ¶ *Because His face was, &c.* Because He was evidently preferring the Jewish feast and temple to their own. There was now a special cause of offence. They were as bigoted in the belief of their false system of religion, as the Jews were of the true. They had their mountain for worship and their feasts, according to the laws of Moses. Jesus, by passing through at such a time, to go to the Jewish feast, condemned their worship; and in their anger at this conduct, they refuse to extend to Him common courtesy. Thus the same act of policy which led Jeroboam to separate from the true worship, in the first place, was the stumbling-block in their way, to prevent their acknowledging Christ. 1 Kings xii. 26, 27. Men adopt one falsehood for some fancied good or convenience. Time passes on and that falsehood becomes a stumbling-block, which they must either remove with shame and tears, or else stumble at the great subjects of Divine truth. No part of the Catholic truth can be given up or neglected without great danger of losing all.

54. *James and John.* Brothers,

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy [a]men's lives, but to save *them.* And they went to another village.

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

59 And [b]he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

a John 3. 17; & 12, 47.

b Matt. 8. 21.

named by Christ for this very impetuosity of temper, Boanerges, sons of thunder. Though their zeal was misplaced in this instance, and contrary to that charity and pure religion, which they afterwards learned and exemplified, it was not so blamable as many moderns would make it. Our Lord's rebuke was very gentle. They were feeling and speaking as ancient saints had done before them. The circumstances were changed. ¶ *Wilt thou that we command?* This was said on the return of the messengers. Their words manifested the highest veneration for their Master. They cannot see Him insulted without a wish to punish the offenders. They seem to expect of Him permission and power to do this, as if more fitting His servants, than His own sovereign power. ¶ *Fire from heaven.* Lightning, or supernatural fire. ¶ *As Elias did.* See 2 Kings i. 10–12. Says St. Ambrose: "For they knew both that when Phinehas had slain the idolaters (Numb. xxv. 8) it was counted to him for righteousness (Ps. cvii. 31); and that at the prayer of Elijah fire came down from heaven, that the injuries of the prophet might be avenged." They were ignorant as yet of spiritual truth, and Christian love. But as Jews, they were by no means without examples, in the history of the saints of their race.

55. *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* 'You are pardonable for your ignorance—*Ye know not*, but, at the same time, blamable for a zeal without knowledge. The spirit which actuates you is wrong.' Let us contrast it with the epistles of this same John, which manifest his zeal, when purified and directed by Christian charity. They wished extermination, not correction. This occasion sets before us the manner in which Jesus treated heretics; men holding falsely certain true doctrines. 1. He was not willing to mingle truth with error, and by attending their worship to make an appearance of liberality. He spoke plainly to them, "ye worship ye know not what." "Salvation is of the Jews," not from your false system of faith. John iv. 22. 2. He makes no pretence of joining in their worship to gain their friendship. He had asked for common favors, had offered to receive hospitality; but His face was the while "steadfastly set towards Jerusalem." There was no compromise possible where truth was concerned. 3. He showed no spirit of persecution, no personal hostility at insult. They rejected Him. He suppressed instantly that spirit in His disciples which, in later Christians, has been the cause of strifes and persecution. The believer may learn from this, not to feign liberality in matters of sacred truth; not to join in worship where his conscience forbids, and, while firm in his own faith, to be just and merciful to all others. ¶ *Came not to destroy men's lives.* He came to save men. The Christian errs widely from His Master's design who seeks to crush others who differ from him. Let him condemn error, and restrain it when he can. Let him seek to recall the deluded to a safer and better mind.

57–62. See explanation in notes, Matt. viii. 19–22.

62. *No man, &c.* A proverbial form

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

a 1 Kings 19. 20. *b* Matt. 9. 37, 38; John 4. 35. *c* 2 Thes. 3. 1.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city, and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, [b]The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; [c]pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

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of speech. The ancient plough was very rude and simple in its construction. It required the whole strength and attention of the laborer. The proverb signifies that no man engaged in a great work should follow it carelessly and suffer his attention to be distracted by other things. How solemn, nay, awful this test of Christian life! The furrow the Christian drives ends only in the grave. The work he engages in leads to immortality or destruction. It is of infinite importance that it be done well. Shall the farmer bend over his plough and give it his whole mind and strength, that the furrow may be run straight and true, to fit it for the grain; and shall the laborer in the vineyard of the Lord dream that he can be pardoned for a foolish, trifling, intermittent labor in the great work of salvation? Would that Christians were as strenuous, as careful and particular in spiritual things, as farmers, artisans, and merchants, are in the things of their vocations. How soon would a purer standard of piety be apparent in the Church. "He puts his hand to the plough who is ambitious to follow; yet looks back again, who *seeks an excuse for delay.*"

CHAPTER X.

1. *After these things.* In the last chapter Jesus was represented as going to Jerusalem. After the feast held there, He returned to the northern part of the Holy Land, and thence sent the seventy through Galilee. ¶ *Other seventy also.* Or, as some suppose, following the Vulgate translation, *seventy-two.* When Moses fainted under the burden of the commission given him in the desert and prayed even to die, God bade him appoint seventy men of the elders of Israel, to receive with him the Spirit of the Lord and to bear a part of the burden of the people. These generally called seventy were in fact seventy-two. See Numb. xi. There had been previously appointed twelve rulers or princes of the tribes. Numb. vii. 2. Hence, as Moses was the type of the Messiah and the nation the type of the Christian Church, so the ministry afterwards established was then complete, in figure. After their appointment the glory of the Lord appeared to them and ordained them for their work. This eldership was continued among the Jews in the great council of the Sanhedrim. That there were divers orders in that first Jewish national Church in the desert is evident. The chief ruler and prophet Moses, and under him the twelve princes and seventy-two elders. When our Lord gave the form to His Church, there appear the same three ranks. Jesus, the Shepherd and Bishop of all; the Apostles, yet subject in all respects and not left to their own action as afterwards they seemed to be; and the seventy, of a rank inferior to them. When the Church was fully organized the same three ranks appear. Jesus has departed, and the disciples

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and [a]salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in the same house remain, [b]eating and drinking such things as they give: [c]for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, [d]The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even the very dust[e] of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.

13 [f]Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! [g]for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolera-

a 2 Kings 4. 29. *b* 1 Cor. 10. 27. *c* 1 Cor. 9. 4; 1 Tim. 5. 18. *d* Matt. 2. 2; & 4. 17.

e Acts 13. 51; & 18. 6. *f* Matt. 11. 21. *g* Ezek. 3. 6.

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have become Apostles, and now govern the Church on earth; the elders being subject to them, and the order of deacons as now constituted. Again the Apostles die, and their successors, the Bishops, take up their mantle. Thus through all ages, as we learn from ancient authors, there have been these three orders of ministers in Christ's Church. ¶ *Two and two.* That they might comfort and corroborate each other. Matt. xviii. 16. Thus all missions should be regulated. See Mark vi. 7.

2. See Matt. ix. 36, 37.

3. See Matt. x. 16.

4. See Matt. x. 10. *Salute no man by the way.* Waste no time in mere idle, innocent occupations. A messenger of a king would not be easily turned aside by common circumstances. Elisha gave a similar charge to Gehazi. 2 Kings iv. 29. For the salutations of the Orientals were not brief and curt as ours, but profuse both of words and gestures. As they were esteemed very important, often causing feuds and contests if refused, the Saviour shows His messengers how they are to esteem His message. It was to yield to no customs or ceremonies of the world. The minister who is earnest for the salvation of others, will show by his manner of life, his sense of the importance of seeking the salvation of men, and impress them accordingly.

5. See Matt. x. 13.

6. *The son of peace.* We would use the adjective instead of the noun, and say a *peaceable, or peace-loving man.* The Jews used this word *son,* in a manner very often emphatic, as for instance: strangers were, in Hebrew, sons of a strange land; arrows were sons of the quiver; the morning star, the son of the morning; Judas, the lost man, the son of perdition. A son is of the same nature as his progenitor; a son of peace has the

ble for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which [a]art exalted to heaven, [b]shalt be thrust down to hell.

16 He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that [c]despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me,[d] despiseth him that sent me.

a Is. 14. 13; Jer. 51. 53. *b* Ezek. 26. 20; & 32. 18. *c* 1 Thes. 4. 8. *d* John 5. 23.

17 ¶ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, [e]I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on [f]serpents and scorpions, and over all the power

e John 2. 31; & 16. 11; Rev. 9. 1; & 12. 8, 9. *f* Mark 16. 18; Acts 28. 5.

love of peace, so deeply fixed in his soul that it seems to be his native disposition. Here it seems to mean those unprejudiced and hospitable men who were willing to listen to the message of peace.

7. See Matt. x. 11.

8–12. See Matt. x. 14, 15.

13–15. See Matt. xi. 21–24.

16. See Matt. x. 40.

17. *Even the devils.* The disciples could work the very highest kind of miracles, such as no one could do except by a power stronger and better than those evil spirits. ¶ *Through Thy name.* See Acts iii. 6–16. Jesus wrought miracles by His own word and will, at all times and in any place. The Apostles, by using His name and commission.

18. *I beheld Satan.* "I knew it and saw in it the beginning of the downfall of the kingdom of evil, as it were in prophetic vision." The prophets used the past tense in describing their visions of future events. Thus Daniel (vii. 9) says: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, &c." He saw in that rapture of prophecy, the future as plainly as if it were before him. So Jesus as a prophet saw Satan fall, because, by the work of the Church on earth the supremacy of evil in the heathen nations would be destroyed. ¶ *Like lightning.* Suddenly, terrifically, and ending in utter darkness. See Is. xiv. 12. The chief idea seems not to be the *suddenness* of that fall, but the certainty of it. As a lurid star Satan ruled—as the god of this world. 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. vi. 12. That reign was now invaded, and would be destroyed and end in shame: even as if by a stream of fiery light, bright and fierce for the time as lightning, that star should fall from heaven. Rev. viii. 10.

19. *I give unto you power.* This was *after* they had returned from their brief mission, and therefore refers to powers to be continued to them permanently. It is an *increase* of power, confirming that already received. You have done well, receive a power of miracles which shall abide with you, and show you to be true prophets and ministers of Mine. It is believed by many that St. Luke was one of the seventy, of whom he alone gives the account. ¶ *To tread on serpents.* Jesus signifies by these words, a promise of preservation to all His ministers, according to their need and the good of His Church. For the first could tread on real serpents and escape; the others may put down the spiritual evils symbolized by them. Satan before had been as it were in heaven. He was now fallen and would ever more creep around the Eden of the Church, as in the first Eden, in these beastly forms. ¶ *Scorpions.* This is the largest and most poisonous of all insects. It is about four inches in length and resembles the lobster in shape, but more hideous. They are dangerous and spiteful, but, fortunately for other animals, exercise their venom freely on each other. Moses reckons them among the dangers of the wilderness. Deut. viii. 15. St. John has given the most careful account of the effect of their poison. Rev. ix. 3–10. It is not always fatal, but produces a horrible fever and agony, in

of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your[a] names are written in heaven.

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 ‖All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him.*

23 ¶ And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see.

24 For I tell you, [b]that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

25 ¶ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is

a Ex. 32. 32; Ps. 69. 28; Is. 4. 3; Dan. 12. 1; Phil. 4. 3; Heb. 12. 23; Rev. 13. 8; & 20. 12; & 21. 27.

‖ Many ancient copies add these words: *And turning to His disciples He said.*

b 1 Pet. 1. 10.

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which the patient longs to die. It is used by Ezekiel as an image of evil men. Ezek. ii. 6. Here it signifies, 1. The actual insect against which the first ministers of the Gospel were protected, even as St. Paul from the viper. Acts xxviii. 3, 5. 2. The powers of evil, whether visible or invisible. Eph. vi. 12. ¶ *The enemy.* The devil, the great enemy of the Church and the soul. This latter portion of the sentence explains the rest. This gift was not one ceasing with a few miracles, but continues over all powers of Satan, and while those powers last.

20. *Rather rejoice.* The power to preach the Gospel of the kingdom and to work miracles in proof of it, was a fit subject of rejoicing, but it was far more important to them that they were heirs of that kingdom by faith, and by a diligent perseverance, might at the last save their own souls. Not all who work miracles in the name of the Lord shall be saved (Matt. vii. 22, 23), nor all who preach to others shall therefore escape being themselves castaways. 1 Cor. ix. 27. ¶ *Names are written in heaven.* See Rev. xx. 12, 15. Allusion is made to the custom of ancient cities of keeping a register of all the persons entitled to the privileges of citizenship. These privileges were often very precious. Acts xxii. 25–28. They whose names appeared in the book of registry, could claim them. So the seventy, and all their successors, while they praise God that their preaching is "in word and also in power," must look carefully to themselves, that they live according to it, so that they may be found citizens of the new Jerusalem, their names enrolled in the Lamb's Book of Life.

21, 22. See Matt. xi. 25–27.

23, 24. See Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

25. *A certain lawyer.* One whose duty it was to teach and explain the laws of Moses. This they pretended to do by the traditions which they declared came down from Moses by word of mouth. They were bigoted and perverse in their opinions, having erred from the truth. They often tempted our Lord by a pretended desire to learn from Him the solution of some mental difficulty. ¶ *Tempted Him.* Tried Him, by a question, hoping to involve Him in debate and render Him unpopular, if He

written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, [a]Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and [b]thy neighbour as thyself.

a Deut. 6. 15. *b* Lev. 19. 18.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and [c]thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering, said, A certain *man* went down from

c Lev. 18. 5; Neh. 9. 29; Ezek. 20. 11, 21; Rom. 10. 5.

opposed the common opinion of the Pharisees. ¶ *Inherit eternal life.* There were divers opinions among the Jews on this subject. Some would have single commandments made the test, others a superstitious regard for the letter of the law. Mark x. 17.

26. *What is written.* See Ps. cxix. 99. This manner of bringing all questions of this kind to the test of the law and the testimony, was confounding to the malice and cunning of the Pharisees, and will ever be so to all men who, following cunningly devised fables, wander from the path of God's commandments. Our Lord does not answer him as he expected, with the subtle distinctions of the two great schools of doctors then existing, but by a simple reference to Moses himself. The law was a covenant. If the Jews kept their part and promise, God surely would keep His, and give them eternal life. So of the Christian covenant in baptism. Let all look to what is written, and be sure that while they believe and do accordingly, they may avoid all interminable party discussions on the subtle questions, which are rife at present.

27, 28. See Matt. xxii. 37–40.

29. *Willing to justify himself.* He wished to show that he was a righteous man, according to Moses. He had in his mind a mode of explaining the law, by which he was a very correct and good man. St. Paul speaks of himself, when a Pharisee, such as this man, as "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Phil. iii. 6. They take an imperfect view of the subtleties of the human heart, who call all Pharisees, hypocrites in every thing. They were hardened in a spiritual pride about their system of faith in the letter, which blinded their hearts far more fatally, than if they had been conscious always of falsehood. John xii. 40. ¶ *And who is my neighbor?* Did he think that he was pure from fault towards God, that he so readily turns to cavil at the second law? The Jewish doctors taught that their neighbors were only, "the children of their people;" opposed to all strangers and Gentiles. See Lev. xix. 15–18, 33, 36. And this nation were, perhaps, more prejudiced at this time against the Samaritans, than against any other people in the world. If, then, a neighbor was found in one so hated, the inference was easily made.

30. *A certain man.* How different this reply from his expectations. Simple, pathetic, convincing, it silenced and taught the Pharisee, and has been of unfailing eloquence to myriads since. "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth," and the good Samaritan can look down to see thousands in all ages, admiring and following his deed of mercy, and confessing the wisdom of that charity which "teacheth more than doctrine can" without it. ¶ *To Jericho.* The city of palm trees, about twenty miles N. E. of Jerusalem and six from the Jordan; taken and destroyed by Joshua (Josh. vi.), rebuilt by Hiel five hundred and thirty-seven years after. 1 Kings xvi. 34. It was the second city of Judea. Herod had there a beautiful palace. It is now desolate, a paltry village, with a few poor houses. ¶ *Fell among thieves.* Robbers who concealed themselves in the caves, and rushed out on the traveller.

Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by[a] on the other side.

a Ps. 38. 11.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a [b]certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on *him*,

34 And went to *him*, and bound

b John 4. 9.

The historian Josephus describes the banditti of Judea, who were mostly exterminated by Herod.—*Antiq.* xv. 7. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is the most dangerous in Palestine. The traveller still hurries over it with a quaking heart, and dreads the wild Arabs, or the cruel outlaws that infest it. "The bold, projecting mass of rocks, the dark shadows in which every thing lies buried below, the towering height of the cliffs above, and the forbidding desolation which every where reigns around, present a picture which is quite in harmony, throughout all its parts. Here pillage, wounds, and death, would be accompanied with double terror, from the frightful aspect of every thing around."

31. *A certain priest.* There were many thousands dwelling at Jericho. This one happened to be the first passer by, after the thieves had departed. The priest should have been first to offer aid. It became his place. And it was safer for him to do it, even if the thieves had returned, from the reverence generally paid by even the worst men to his office. Lam. iv. 16. Alas for the people, when the shepherds are daunted and flee from trouble.

32. *A Levite.* The third grade of the ministers of the Jewish Church, answering to the deacons of the Christian Church. Their duty was to assist the priests in the ministrations of the temple, and perform the manual labors of the service. Jesus describes the carelessness of those whose duties and stations rendered them the most suitable helpers of the wounded Jew, in order to contrast with them the one who aided him. The ministers of God should be ensamples to others. Ps. cxxxii. 9; 1 Pet. v. 3. ¶ *Came and looked on him.* Was partly inclined to help him, but wanted courage. The first, puffed up by pride, and selfish, and timid, hastened on, too glad to escape himself. This one of lower rank and poorer, came and showed an ineffectual pity for his countryman. How often do Christians show this still same ineffectual pity. James ii. 15, 16.

33. *A certain Samaritan.* See Matt. x. 5; John iv. 9. There was an inveterate hatred between the Jews and Samaritans, fanned by the breath of religious discord. Neighbors in place, and holding alike to the books of Moses, they cherished for each other implacable animosity. Our Saviour, by taking an extreme case, has included all men in the rule of mercy, which is taught by this narrative. ¶ *Moved with compassion.* This sympathy was the bond of neighborhood, which hid all the differences of religion and race; the hostilities and wrongs of centuries. He saw one needing help, and that was enough; he saw a brother.

34. *Pouring in oil and wine.* These liquids were often used medicinally. See Prov. xxxi. 6; James v. 14. He did the best that he could; took out the best means of relieving him from the provisions which he had provided for his own comfort, and gave him instant assistance. His pity was prompt, energetic and generous. Having determined to help, he did it at once, and with all his might. Nothing could be added to this picture, to impress the lesson of charity. He is alone, but he does not

up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out ‖two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

‖ See Matt. 20. 2.

wait for others to urge or shame him. The place is dangerous; he forgets it. The man is a Jew; he cares not for that. Why not go on and send back others to help him? No; he acts at once; gives relief to recall the man to life, and then means to sustain the life he had saved. ¶ *Inn.* A place where all were lodged; probably a mere roof or court-yard of the rudest kind; such places are called menzils or caravanseras in the East. Another Greek word is used (Luke ii. 7), for the inn of Bethlehem. Some think this a place provided for strangers, and that Jews were accommodated in private houses.

35. *Two pence.* Two coins called *denari*, about thirty cents of our money. This seems a small sum to us, but we must always calculate money by that which it will buy. A penny was a day's wages. See note, Matt. xx. 2. The man gave them that which was equivalent to two days' wages, which, with us, would be from one to three dollars. This was to last until he returned. Nothing was furnished at these inns. The keeper sold whatever one might need.

36. *Was neighbor.* Which deserved this title, by his actions? The answer is plain. Then whom would the law call neighbor in its true spiritual sense? Of course the Samaritan. Thus did our Lord avoid a wordy dispute as to the letter of the Mosaic law, which distinguished between neighbor and stranger, and escaped the snare set for Him of seeming to contradict Moses. If He had stated that answer in other words, the lawyer would have reported Him as opposing the law. But when the appeal wins the heart and shows a true response inevitable, enmity is disarmed, and hatred replies truly. Thus let the Christian be true within, and learn that charity, which is more precious than angels' tongues, and he will be wise to win souls.

37. *He that showed mercy.* Jesus promises to His people "a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." Luke xxi. 15. Here He has shown us a specimen of it. The lawyer who came to tempt, gives his unwilling testimony. A light of truth flashes into his heart, which shows him the weakness of his former subtleties. ¶ *Go, and do thou likewise.* Learn from an enemy wisdom, and imitate him. Thus is the question answered. No matter how warm our expressions, how burning our eloquence, how superior our dogmas, so long as we have not charity they profit us nothing. 1 Cor. xiii. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision —neither privilege of itself saves, nor want of it ruins, but only as joined to *faith which worketh by love.* "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Gal. v. 6, 14. Saith St. Ambrose: "For relationship does not make a neighbor, but *compassion*, for compassion is according to nature. For nothing is so natural as to assist one who shares our nature." Our Prayer-Book teaches us that "all our doings without charity are nothing worth:" that in a Christian sense, it is the "gift of the Holy Ghost," that *most excellent gift* of charity, the very bond of

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman, named [a]Martha, received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also [b]sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered, and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things:

[a] John 11. 1; & 12. 2, 3.

[b] Lu. 8. 35; Acts 22. 3.

peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth, is counted dead before God." And so the 142d hymn:

The faith which new-creates the heart,
And works by active love,
Will bid all sinful joys depart
And lift the thoughts above.

38. *A certain village.* Bethany, a small village on the eastern side of the mount of Olives. See John xi. 1. ¶ *Received Him.* Entertained Him as an honored guest. She thought more of hospitality than grace. Grotius conjectures that she was a widow, and another writer suggests that she was the widow of Simon. See Matt. xxvi. 6. But this is only a conjecture, to explain the fact that it is called *her house.* She as the elder sister, in the absence of her brother may have been the mistress, and the house for once termed hers.

39. *Sat at Jesus' feet.* This was the common posture of disciples before their teachers. Deut. xxxiii. 3. So St. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts xxii. 3. Jesus had probably but a short time to remain in Bethany at this time. Mary, anxious to lose none of His instructions, and with a soul filled with a love of truth, esteemed all other things as of little consequence for the time.

40. *Martha was cumbered about much serving.* Was prevented from listening to the truth taught by Jesus, as she too wished, by the many cares of preparing food and other things for His sustenance. Martha is not severely rebuked as one entirely mistaken. She seems to have been distracted by her two desires, both of them tending to honor Jesus. She wished to hear, she wished also to honor Him by her preparations. As a disciple, she desired to sit at His feet; as mistress of the family she was over busied. She was cumbered with her serving, and could not listen. Her wish was probably that Mary should help her to serve, that she also might learn with her. Her error was, that she put the lesser duty first. ¶ *Dost Thou not care?* Is it no trouble to Thee? This mode of address was familiar, but that which friendship authorized. Jesus loved this family. She speaks to Him as to a friend. As her anxiety was to entertain Him with honor, she asks Him if He cared so little for her doing so, as to suffer her younger sister to sit in idleness the while. On any other occasion she would have prevailed. Jesus would not have encouraged idleness.

41. *About many things.* Jesus gently reproves her, that she could be so anxious about those matters which concerned hospitality at such a time, and also find it in her heart to rebuke her sister for her choice of listening undisturbed to the sacred instructions of truth. Her care was the proof of her love, but her love was not as wise as Mary's. Some commentators, following Theophylact, would read, *about many dishes, but one dish is necessary,* but it seems more worthy the occasion to make the contrast as in the English translation, between *things;* as referring to the different conduct of the sisters.

42. *But one thing is needful. The good part.* Namely, the love and knowledge of sacred truth, which was then prompting Mary. In the knowledge of God, and obedience according

42 But [a]one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, [b]Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us ‖day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

a Ps. 27. 4.

b Matt. 6. 9. ‖ Or, *for the day.*

to it, standeth eternal life. 1 John v. 20, and ii. 3. This was of first importance to that pious woman. She knew her duty to her elder sister, doubtless seldom, if ever, failed to render it. But when the Lord was present, she felt that it was far better to satisfy first the hunger of the mind after a knowledge of righteousness, than to be over-solicitous concerning household cares. ¶ *That good part.* Piety is the good part, having the promise of all things necessary here, and of life everlasting. ¶ *Which shall not be taken away.* Our Saviour will never Himself take away His grace from the believer, nor allow any creature to do it. Only as we reject it, will it be lost. While we hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Rom. viii. 35; Heb. iv. 11. "The one thing needful is an earnest desire of spiritual instruction and improvement; or in other words, a serious and constant regard to our everlasting welfare. But how few are there among all Christians who uniformly act with a view to this needful thing; and what multitudes are so entangled in the various occupations of a busy and tumultuous life, that, like Martha, they are more disposed to call in the help of others to their worldly employments, than to take away any portion of their attention from them, to bestow them on the concerns of another life."—*Bp. Porteus.*

CHAPTER XI.

1. *Lord, teach us to pray.* Forms of prayer were then universal. The Jewish service was at that time, as it is still, conducted after regular liturgical rules. To these rules our Lord and His disciples submitted when they visited the temple or the synagogues. John had adopted certain prayers, probably for the speedy coming of Messiah's kingdom, and taught them to his followers. The disciples therefore felt that they were deficient in this respect, as followers of Jesus, and wished Him to give them a *set form of prayer.* This our Lord did in selecting and arranging this prayer.

2. *When ye pray, say.* When ye pray, not only mean, but *say* these words, not binding us down, perhaps, to the letter, but surely requiring of us, as dutiful children, to join with our prayers this one, in order to make them perfect. In all common prayers, our Church enjoins this, not for a foolish tautology, but that she may supply the defects and infirmities of our prayers. "As the ten commandments are a sum of all duty, or what is to be done, so is this prayer a sum of all things to be desired. As the ten commandments contain our duty towards God and towards our neighbor, so in this prayer are petitions for God's honor, for ourselves and for others. He gave both the commandments and the prayer that we might see our duty, and pray for ability to perform it. The ten

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves:

6 For a friend of mine in ‖his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 [a]And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he ‖offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

‖ Or, *out of his way.* [a] Mark 7. 7; & 21. 22; Jas. 1. 6; 1 John 3. 22. ‖ Greek, *give.*

commandments were twice rehearsed, and so this prayer was twice delivered, first in the Sermon on the Mount, and afterwards in this text, about a year later."—*Dr. Lightfoot.* See Matt. vi. 9–13.

4. *For we also forgive.* This is somewhat different in form from St. Matthew, but is of the same meaning. The test which we propose for our own judgment at God's hands, is the spirit which we manifest in forgiving others. ¶ *Every one that is indebted to us.* Injuries are like debts, they require reparation. As we forgive others a debt, so as to require it not again, and as it were, blot it out of memory, so we do the same towards persons injuring us, when we pardon them.

5–8. *At midnight.* In hot countries, journeys are often made at night, in order to avoid the heat of the day. As the Jews were accustomed to entertain each other in private houses, this incident was very natural, and the pertinacity of the man desiring help was excusable. Our Lord teaches us to use that perseverance in prayer to God which common sense bids us use with our friends. Though infinitely removed from us in character and power, God loves to hear and answer prayer. James i. 5, 6, and v. 16. ¶ *In bed.* Not necessarily in the same; though poor families often slept in the same room on mattresses on the floor. All were in bed, and unwilling to be disturbed. ¶ *Because of his importunity.* His continued asking. This is true beyond doubt. Often men do that upon importunity which they would not do otherwise. And God hears us, not to rid Himself of us, but to reward our fidelity and constancy. He always answers a true, fervent prayer at once, if it is best for us. But it often requires repetition in us and seeming denial from Him, to make us fervent and sincere.

9–12. See notes, Matt. vii. 7–11. ¶ *Scorpion.* Bochart says that the body of the white scorpion, when coiled up, resembles an egg in size and appearance. How outrageously cruel would a father be who would place one in the hand of a child asking him for food, to sting him to death. See note, Luke x. 19.

14–23. See notes, Matt. xii. 22–30.

14 ¶ And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through ‖Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.

16 And others tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, [c]knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with [b]the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger [c]than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest: and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the [d]last state of that man is worse than the first.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed *are* they [e]that hear the word of God, and keep it.

29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, he

‖ Greek, *Beelzebul*. *a* John 2. 25. *b* Ex. 8. 19. *c* Is. 53. 12; Col. 2. 15. *d* John 5. 14; Heb. 6. 4; & 10. 26; 2 Pet. 2. 20. *e* Matt. 7. 21; Jas. 1. 25.

24–26. See Matt. xii. 43–45.

27, 28. *A certain woman.* The wicked objectors would not be convinced, but one of the crowd spake out her opinion freely. ¶ *Blessed is, &c.* How happy must be the mother of one so wise and powerful, so merciful and gentle. ¶ *Rather blessed.* Great as was the honor of Mary in being the mother of our Lord, far greater was her blessing, as it is of all believers, that they hear and obey the Divine word. "He sought not to disown His mother, but to show that His birth would have profited her nothing, had she not been really fruitful in works and faith. But if it profited Mary nothing that Christ derived His birth from her, without the inward virtue of her heart, much less will it avail us to have a virtuous father, brother or son, while we ourselves are strangers to virtue."—*St. Chrysostom.*

29–32. See Matt. xii. 38–45.

33–36. These same illustrations oc-

began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as Jonas [a]was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

31 The [b]queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they [c]repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

33 No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a ‖bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body is full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light; as when ‖the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

a Jonah 1. 17; & 2. 10. *b* 1 Kings 10. 1. *c* Jonah 3. 5.

‖ See Matt. 5. 15. ‖ Greek, *A candle by its bright shining.*

cur in St. Matthew's Gospel, but in different connections. See Matt. v. 15; vi. 22, 23.

37. *And as He spake.* While He was speaking to the people, and rebuking the Pharisees as above, one of them, with some subtle design, asked Him to go to his house with him. We may judge of his motives by the style in which the conversation continued and the result of it. Verses 53, 54. ¶ *To dine with him.* The Jews took generally but two meals a day, the first about twelve o'clock, and the second after the heat of the day was past. The first meal is here intended. ¶ *And sat down to meat.* Just as He was. The Pharisees, after leaving a crowd of common people in the market place, streets, and the like, washed themselves scrupulously before eating, lest their persons might have been ceremonially defiled by touching some unclean person. Jesus had been among the people. Sinners had crowded about Him. He therefore omitted that custom, which was no part of the law of Moses, but only a vain and proud tradition. He would teach these Pharisees by the act that He was not the prophet of a sect or rank, but of *man*, the sinner, of that very people, whom on one occasion they called "*cursed*" for their regard to His teachings. John vii. 49. Jesus did not break any law of the Mosaic ritual on this occasion.

38. *Saw it.* Saw that He omitted the act of washing His hands. Persons knowingly touching unclean persons were ceremonially defiled. But this foolish scrupulosity was an inference of Pharisaical pride. See Matt. xv. 2; Mark vii. 4. Forms are evil when they burden or obscure the sim-

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your [a]inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 *Ye* fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 But [b]rather give ‖ alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 [c]Wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats

a Tim. 1. 15. *b* Is. 58. 7; Dan. 4. 27.

‖ Or, *as you are able.* *c* Matt. 23. 23, &c.

plicity of faith. And every one professing the name of Christ has to beware of this danger, not by a foolish pretence of doing without forms, for which pretence some are obstinately formal, but by using such forms and ceremonies as have the stamp of antiquity and the approval of the wisest Christians. Forms are arbitrary. They ought to be used in just moderation to avoid slovenliness in our services, which begets unbelief; and kept free from superstition, which conceals the voice of God in the conscience.

39. *Ravening.* Robbery, or unjust seizure of the goods of others. How foolish would a man be to cleanse the glass from which he was about to drink poison. The Pharisees were most anxious for one point of their traditional law, while they broke the written law boldly in its great commands. They piously washed the hand which was to convey to their mouths the food wickedly plundered from widows and orphans. See Matt. xxxiii. 25.

40. *Ye fools.* Unthinking men, devoid of reasoning in morals, and so sinners. ¶ *Did not He, &c.* If the same God made the conscience as well as the body, the inside of the cup as well as the outside, the law against cruelty and hypocrisy, as well as that concerning unclean persons, can He not see the greater sin, and will He be pleased with such sham service done unto Him? Cleanse the soul as well as the body, and all will be well. Heb. x. 22.

41. *Alms.* Such things as are given in charity, to poor and afflicted persons. ¶ *Of such things as ye have.* The margin reads—of such things as you are able, i. e., to give alms from. Thus our Lord draws his lesson from things before Him. He teaches them that instead of filling their dishes with scruples and plunder of the poor, they should be merciful. Mercy is put here and elsewhere as the proof and test of true piety, because it is of itself the highest act of self-denial; the surest evidence of a heart choosing the heavenly treasure. But mercy is not mere *giving.* The rich men once gave their goods; the poor widow "her living." Her gift alone was registered as true alms. Alms-giving when used alone, is put forward only as the crowning jewel of a coronet of gems, all united to and pointing to it, because it visibly fulfils "in one word the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" Rom. xiii. 9. ¶ *And, behold, all things are clean.* "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Titus i. 15. The false, self-deceived Christian, is generally a lover of this present world. The test of a renewed state, in which he shall be clean, that is, acceptable to God, is to be found in his denying himself the goods which he before coveted, and spending his energies in doing good. Titus ii. 12.

43-44. See Matt. xxiii. 6, 27.

45. *Lawyers.* One of that class

in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are [a]as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them.*

45 ¶ Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 Wo unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

a Ps. 5. 9.

48 Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 From the blood of [b]Abel unto [c]the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

b Gen. 4. 8. *c* 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21.

called elsewhere "Scribes and Pharisees;" those who taught the Jewish system of religion and laws to the people. The lawyers may have been more exclusively teachers of the meaning of the Mosaic laws and the traditions, than the Scribes or Pharisees.

46. See Matt. xxiii. 4.

47–51. See Matt. xxiii. 29–36.

49. *The wisdom of God.* Therefore God has in His wisdom sent you messengers. The corresponding words of St. Matthew are, "Behold I send you prophets and wise men." These words are not in the Old Testament. Some refer the words, after St. Ambrose, to Christ, called in Prov. viii. the Wisdom of God. It seems more natural that Jesus should not have signified Himself, except by inference; as it was not then the object of His teaching, to make known His Divinity. That which God had actually done in His wisdom for this people, He presents that wisdom as uttering in intention. ¶ *Apostles.* Messengers.

52. See Matt. xxiii. 13. *The key of knowledge.* They had lost that simple light of truth by which the Scriptures could be interpreted, and their true meaning understood. The door to the kingdom of heaven consisted in the knowledge of God, and they had shut men out from entering that kingdom, by their perplexing and superstitious doctrines. A Jewish doctor was admitted to his office of teaching by delivering to him a key, as a symbol. To this our Lord alludes. They had the form —the key of material substance, but had lost that purity and truth, by which alone the soul can know the doctrines which be of God. Pride, wickedness, bigotry, superstition, blind the mind, and put a vail over the eyes, which nothing can lift. And in every age we must mourn over the power that heresy, false doctrine and schism, pride and impenitence exercise over a large part of the Christian world.

53. *To urge Him vehemently.* To ask Him all manner of questions, threaten, lay wait for and crowd Him with doubtful or foolish matters. There are many ways in which a crowd of wicked men may overwhelm and confuse a sin-

52 Wo unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye ‖ hindered.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to [a]catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

‖ Or, *forbade.* *a* Mark 12. 13.

gle one. The Pharisees in place of repenting sought to entrap the Teacher who spake plainly the truth unto them. ¶ *Provoke Him.* Not to anger, but to hurt and confuse Him into saying something which could be used against Him. Specimens of this same evil questioning are given at length by St. Matthew, Ch. xxii. 15, to end.

54. *Laying wait for Him.* Asking subtle questions, which could not easily be answered. Laying snares for Him, as hunters for their game. The simplicity of our Lord's teaching and manner may have led them to hope, that He like a dove could be easily ensnared. See Ps. cxxiv. and xi. 1, 2. ¶ *Accuse Him.* They would then have accused Him before the great council of the nation, if He had said any thing against the law of Moses: or before the Roman governor, if He had breathed a whisper against the power of Cæsar. How sublime and amazing the wisdom, which taught freely the whole truth in an evil generation—yet left His subtle and powerful adversaries no testimony to offer against Him, save by foolish and contradictory false witnesses. We may study the life of our Saviour to find in it examples of this prudence, by which we may live harmless in our day, and safe from the "strife of tongues." Ps. xxxi. 19, 20; Heb. xii. 3.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *In the mean time.* On some occa-

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IN the mean time, when [b]there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode upon one another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall

b Matt. 16. 6; Mark 8. 15.

sion when He was conversing with the Pharisees. ¶ *An innumerable multitude. Ten thousands* or myriads is the Greek word. It signifies an immense multitude. Jesus repeats to them the same charge which He had previously made in private to the twelve disciples. His Church was not to look to the wisdom of men for support, but to truth; and in trusting to that would receive the help of God. 1 Cor. i. 26–29. The disciples seeing so large a multitude following and listening to the Saviour, were in danger of leaning on an arm of flesh, instead of God's power. ¶ *First of all.* To them as the future guides of the Church this was especially directed. It applies equally to all believers, whose faith must "not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. ¶ *The leaven.* See note, Matt. xvi. 6. ¶ *Hypocrisy.* See note, Matt. vii. 5. This figure of speech is frequently used in the Gospel. As leaven when concealed in dough, changes the whole mass of it, so false doctrine, or hypocrisy, alters the whole life of the spirit; from a simple, truthful Christian, following with a docile mind the word of God, making a man a proud, subtle, audacious and cruel contemner of the truth. We often use the word hypocrisy of one who knowingly deceives others. It is here used rather of those who have become self-deceived, and reprobate, and who, therefore, all the more indus-

be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

4 And [a]I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for [l]two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore: ye are of more value that many sparrows.

8 [b]Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

9 But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

10 And whosoever [c]shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

a Matt. 10. 28; Is. 51. 7, 8, 12, 13; Jer. 1. 8. ‖ See Matt. 10. 29. *b* Matt. 10. 32; Mark 8. 38; 2 Tim. 2. 12; 1 John 2. 23.

c Matt. 12. 31, 32; Mark 3. 28; 1 John 5. 10.

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triously deceive other men. The spirit of the Pharisees was cruel and malicious. Jesus warns His disciples against it. Says Gregory Nazianzen: "When leaven is praised, it is as composing the bread of life, but when blamed, it signifies a lasting and bitter maliciousness."

2–9. See note, Matt. x. 26–32.

10. See Matt. xii. 32.

11, 12. See Matt. x. 17–20.

13. Our Lord was teaching the awful state of such as should grieve the Holy Ghost, till it left them to a reprobate mind. This evil state was most often brought on men by a love of this world, which is enmity against God. Immediately an incident occurred, which He seizes to impress more deeply the lesson, that covetousness is the idolatry which Christians should avoid, lest they should quench the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Comp. James iv. 4; Col. iii. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 10. ¶ *One of the company.* Two brothers were contending for an inheritance, and one wished to defraud the other. The one who asks may have been inclined to obey Jesus, and therefore looked up to Him, to secure justice against the brother. Jesus would lift the man's heart to better treasures. ¶ *Divide the inheritance.* By the law, a double portion belonged to the first-born. Deut. xxi. 17. The property was then equally divided among the rest. To settle differences of this kind, is not the office of a minister of religion.

14. *Who made Me, &c.* He who entered not upon His work of saving souls, until He was called of God as was Aaron, would not pretend to any office over temporal possessions. As a man He was obedient in all things, and was not willing to appear to exercise any office to which He had not been especially called. Men may learn, that fitness for

14 And he said unto him, [a]Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, [b]Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns,

a John 18. 36.

b 1 Tim. 6, 7, &c.

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an office in Church or State does not give one a right to exercise it. We would not accept the decisions of any self-elected magistrate. May we not ask the proofs of mission in one claiming to be a "judge and divider," in spiritual things? Jesus first rebukes the man for mistaking His office, and then points Him to the true riches—which are "godliness with contentment." 1 Tim. vi. 6.

15. *Beware of covetousness.* From this incident He turns the attention of His hearers to the evil which lies at the root of all strifes about property—an undue selfish love of earthly pleasure, which is the exact opposite of true Christian love for the brethren. Set not your heart on riches, for they conceal from you the spiritual blessings of heaven, and fill your hearts with bitterness. Covetousness is a selfish love of pleasure, and so of the things which belong to others. It is forbidden by the Tenth Commandment. Ex. xx. 17. ¶ *A man's life.* True life—or the happiness of a man's life, does not consist in riches, &c., but in the state of his heart and mind. This is capable of a thousand proofs: is seen illustrated on every side. A contented mind with a competency is sufficient. Discontent with wealth is only a curse. Those who then heard Jesus were to try this lesson. He warns them, therefore, to fix their heart on the true riches, that they may not look for sensual pleasure, or be caught in the snares of wealth, in their future life. ¶ *Consisteth not.* His life is not made happy by them, does not *depend* on them. This Jesus proves by the fact that when one is at the richest he must leave the wealth he has labored for. The true life of the soul is that which cannot be lost, and to that Christians must always look for their happiness. He shall be kept in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon the Lord, because he trusteth in Him. Is. xxvi. 3.

16. *A parable.* See Matt. xii. 3. ¶ *Plentifully.* By the blessing of God of which he took no note.

17. *He thought.* He reasoned anxiously what to do with so large a harvest. "He remembered not his fellow-creatures, nor deemed that he ought to give of his superfluities to the needy. His barns, indeed, bursting from the abundance of his stores, yet was his greedy mind by no means satisfied."—*St. Basil.* ¶ *My fruits.* The word is emphatic. He says not God's gifts, or he would have remembered that he was a steward who was yet to give an account, but he calls them "my fruits," i. e., the fruits of his own industry and ability. The farmer ought to read the lesson his land teaches him ever; that God gives plenty or sends scarcity, according to His own will. This man makes no mention of God's mercy, and offers Him no thanks for His success.

18. *My barns.* Places for storing grain. These were sometimes dug out of the earth, for safety. These barns seem rather to have been houses. He had no occasion to conceal his grain. He could look forward to no danger that was threatening him. How many are there who insult high Heaven by a spirit like this—ungrateful, sensual and selfish. And while friends and possessions lull them into a sense of security,

and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, [a]Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night [b]thy soul shall be [b]required of thee: then whose [c]shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, [d]and is not rich toward God.

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap: which neither have store-house, nor barn; and [e]God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with tak-

a Ecc. 11. 9; 1 Cor. 15. 32; Jas. 5. 5. ‖ Or, *do they require thy soul.* *b* Job 20. 22; & 27. 8; Ps. 52. 7; Jas. 4. 14.

c Ps. 39. 6; Jer. 17, 11. *d* 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19; Jas. 2. 5. *e* Job 38. 41; Ps. 147. 9.

a fall, an apoplexy, or some trifling accident hurries them into eternity. They are set in slippery places. Ps. lxxiii.

19. *Eat, drink, and be merry.* He was on the pinnacle of human happiness, as far as sensual pleasures could promote it. He needed nothing. The future was bright. Covetousness, his idol, had blinded him to the folly of his words, and he was now ready to enjoy his riches. The picture is striking. Just as he boasts and exults in his success the bolt falls, which shows the infinite folly of which he was guilty. See Dan. iv. 30, &c.

20. *Thou fool.* Surely no greater folly and sin can be committed than for man to forget God, and lean on riches, to seek to gain this world, and lose his own soul in the search. ¶ *This night.* Probably after a debauch or excess at a feast, when he was boasting thus, an apoplexy seized him—as it does such easy and merry worldlings to this day. Neighbors gathered around, and saw only the vain struggles of the physicians, and envied the rich man his wealth, or flattered his heir. But his soul heard God saying to him, "This night shall *they require thy soul;*" as St. Chrysostom says, "*they*, certain dread powers were perhaps sent to require it." And in one gloomy night all is over. Alas, reader, we all know this wretched folly, but we love riches still.

21. *So is he.* This is the moral. This is and will be the case with all who choose this world before another. whether they gain much or little of it, In a night their souls are required, and then the objects which they coveted are fled and useless for ever. It may be a kingdom, it may be a brickfield, that is coveted. The end is the same at the last, with the ungodly king and the slave, the master and the servant. ¶ *Layeth up treasure for himself.* To spend only upon his own selfish pleasures—to buy objects of desire, and taste the many fine things of this life, that mark the man of wealth. How many Christians must feel the rebukes of conscience, if they will compare the use of their wealth with these words. Does not a man lay up for *himself* who spends two, three, five thousand dollars on his pleasure or his "style," and perhaps a hundred, perhaps less, in charity? ¶ *Towards God.* By laying up stores in heaven. This is done by charity and alms-giving, as Scripture clearly shows, and true faith unhesitatingly prompts. See Prov. xix. 17; Matt. vi. 19, 20; 1 Tim. vi. 17–19; Heb. vi. 10. "In vain he amasses wealth who knows not how to use it. Neither are

ing thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not: and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, ‖neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 ¶ But rather [a]seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms: [b]provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 Let your [c]loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord,

‖ Or, *live not in careful suspense.* *a* Matt. 6. 33. *b* Acts 2. 45; & 4. 34; 1 Tim. 6. 19. *c* Eph. 6. 14; 1 Pet. 1. 13.

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these things ours, which we cannot take away with us; virtue alone is the companion of the dead. Mercy alone follows us, which gains for the dead an everlasting habitation."—*St. Ambrose.*

22–31. See Matt. vi. 25–33.

29. *Of doubtful mind.* St. James calls it a double mind, James i. 6–8; and iv. 3. It is a believing mind, over-anxious about food and clothing. Pray to God with faith, and trust the rest to Him. "Who ever trusted in the Lord, and was confounded?" Ecclus. ii. 10.

32. *Little flock.* In opposition to the powers of wealth and kings, there would be a few poor, unlearned Christians. Jesus having forbid them to seek after worldly things, now encourages them, that, though a little flock, few, evidently unable to cope with the powers of sin, yet it was God's will to give them the kingdom of grace here, of heaven hereafter. The maxims which follow, impress this same thought. For they are paradoxes of grace. Men do not generally give away what they have when they are preparing forces to obtain a kingdom. But God's power must be manifested in man's impotence, and His grace in man's humility and purity from worldliness.

33–34. See note, Matt. vi. 19–21. *Sell that ye have.* The disciples obeyed these orders literally at first, as was their evident duty. Acts ii. 45; iv. 37. It is now required of us that we so use our earthly possessions, that the mind be not contaminated by them, but willing to surrender them, as stewards, not as owners. ¶ *Bags which wax not old.* True riches opposed to earthly riches. The purses of the Jews were bags attached to their girdles. Of course such would perish. But almsgiving, mercy, would follow them into another world, and there come into their final account before God. The word *wax* means, become or grow not old.

35. *Let your loins be girded.* The Jew when at labor, or on a journey, girded the large loose cloak, which he wore, more closely around his waist, with a girdle, that his lower limbs could be free. To gird the loins was a sign of preparation for labor or a journey.

when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them so*, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, [a]that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 [b]Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants, and maidens, and to eat, and drink, and to be drunk;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour

a 1 Thes. 5. 2; 2 Pet. 3. 10; Rev. 3. 3; & 16. 15.

b 1 Thes. 5. 6; 2 Pet. 3. 12.

The rich glutton was unprepared for death—the disciple must be ready for it as if it were only a journey which he was glad to take. Acts xii. 8. ¶ *Your lights burning.* Servants were expected to have their lights burning on the return of the master of the house, no matter at what hour he might come. So the Christian who was thus prepared for the coming of Christ, either at his individual death or at the end of all things, should be honored anew by the Lord for his fidelity.

36. See Matt. xxv. 1–13.

37. *Shall gird himself.* Jesus will so reward all faithful followers, whom He shall find watching and laboring in their vocation until death, as an earthly master would, who would do the actions here described. The joys and glories of heaven will surpass all our expectation, and be above all our desert. And they who reach its blessed abodes will be filled with pleased amazement, even as servants here would be at such condescension in their master. The Christian, weary with labors and long watchings, shall after his toil receive a reward, and rest from them. Christ will set before him spiritual blessings, and minister to his soul enjoyments that as yet no mind can conceive.

38–46. See Matt. xxiv. 42–51. ¶ *Second watch*, Matt. xiv. 25.

47. *Which knew his Lord's will.* This principle is just. Whoso refuses to do his Master's will when known, is deserving of greater punishment than the ignorant offender, because he sins by intention. And those who are born and bred in Christian lands, who are made members of the Church by the covenant of baptism, hear the word from infancy, and know all that a

when he is not aware, and ‖will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And [a]that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

48 But he [b]that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 ¶ I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?

‖ Or, *cut him off.* [a] Num. 15. 30; Deut. 25. 2; Acts 17. 30; Jas. 4. 17. [b] Lev. 5. 17; 1 Tim. 1. 13.

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I ‖straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; [c]but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

54 ¶ And he said also to the

‖ Or, *pained.* [c] Mic. 7. 6; John 7. 43; & 9. 16; & 10. 19.

Christian ought to know for his soul's health—shall certainly be severely dealt with in the future retribution.

48. *For unto whomsoever, &c.* What are we doing with our privileges now? Reader, are you born in a Christian family, with all the aids and helps of a Christian education, with talents to do good, with influences over others around you? How are you using these means? Reflect that God will require of you, even as He has blessed you—will punish you according to the gracious influences you have neglected, the opportunities you have suffered to pass unimproved, the mercies you have despised.

49. *I am come, &c.* I am come to preach a Gospel which shall be the cause of great strifes and opposition among wicked men, yet so much is it to the glory of God and the good of all men, that I wish it to be begun. Jesus did not wish evil and strife for themselves, but He saw that by His Gospel souls would be saved, and that object He desired, although at the cost of great temporal trouble. ¶ *Fire.* This element is used frequently in Scripture as the emblem of trouble and confusion. Is. ix. 5; Ps. lxvi. 12. "Now it is the way of holy Scripture to use sometimes the term *fire*, of holy and Divine words. For as they who know how to purify gold and silver, destroy the cross by fire, so the Saviour by the teaching of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit cleanses the minds of those who believe in Him. This, then, is that wholesome and useful fire, by which the inhabitants of the earth, now cold and dead through sin, revive to a life of piety." —*St. Cyril.*

50. *A baptism.* A baptism of fire—a sinking into the depths of keenest agony and suffering in the crucifixion. He was to be the first to undergo the "fiery trials" which were in the future. 1 Pet. iv. 12. See Matt. xx. 22. ¶ *Straitened.* Grieved at its delay, since men are dying daily. Oppressed in spirit till it was done,—even as one eagerly longs for an inevitable trouble to be past, for the sake of the good to

people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when *ye see* the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth; but how is it, that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 ¶ When thou [a]goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give [b]diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last [‖]mite.

a Prov. 25. 8. b Ps. 32. 6; Is. 55. 6.

CHAPTER XIII.

THERE were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

‖ See Mark 12. 42.

be received after it. Eph. i. 19. For this purpose Jesus came on the earth, and He now began to look forward to it as near at hand, not only ready, but willing to redeem it.

51–53. See Matt. x. 34–36.

54–57. See Matt. xvi. 2, 3. ¶ *South wind.* These are the hot winds of Jerusalem, blowing across the sandy deserts of Arabia and Egypt. They are often so hot that they bring on fainting and great difficulty of breathing. Men would naturally prepare for such, would take what means they could to bear them. How careless they are of that fierce anger of God at sin, which shall kindle the "everlasting burnings."

58, 59. See Matt. v. 25, 26.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *There were present.* On the occasion of receiving the news of this act of Pilate, the following discourse occurred. St. Luke does not intend to join this chapter to the last, but simply to continue a description of the preaching of Jesus. ¶ *At that season.* During those times. This probably happened in the June or July before the crucifixion. ¶ *Some that told Him.* Probably some persons from Galilee, who condemned the cruelty of the governor, or wished to tempt Jesus to say something which could be reported to His injury. If we judge of their motives, as we often may, by the answer which our Lord makes, it appears that they were disposed to adopt a common error, that misfortune was always a proof of guilt, and to flatter themselves for their own advantages. ¶ *Galileans.* Inhabitants of Galilee. They were often engaged in tumults against the Roman power. Galilee was at this time under the jurisdiction of Herod. Jesus, as a prophet from Galilee, was supposed to be inclined to take part with His neighbors. ¶ *Whose blood Pilate, &c.* Whom Pilate slew while they were engaged in the act of offering sacrifices to God in the temple, so that their blood mingled with that of the victims. Temples were considered places of great sacredness. Criminals often fled to them for safety, and escaped punishment on account of the reverence in which they were held. It was a very unusual thing even for a heathen governor to violate the sanctuary of a temple. Who these Galileans were, or what their crime, is not known. It must have been one of open wickedness to excite Pilate to so bold a deed. Probably they were conspiring against him, even in the temple, or were using their religion as a means of influence with the populace, so that he smote them then in order to strike terror into the rest. But sinners as they were, the inference made by some that their fate

2 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were ‖sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable: A certain *man* had a [a]fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dress-

‖ Or, *debtors.*

[a] Is. 5. 2; Matt. 21. 19.

was a mark of Divine justice against them was incorrect; for if God punished all who were equally guilty, then the hearers of these words of Christ would not have escaped.

2, 3. *Suppose ye?* Do you infer that they were criminals above all others? Jesus rebukes this ill-natured conclusion, and teaches them to think of their own deserts. And afflictions of this kind should make us look within, to ask, why are we spared, while others are cut off. It is a mistake of the natural heart, which appears and is condemned often in Scripture, the notion that afflictions are always marks of Divine vengeance. See Job iv. 7.; John ix. 2; Matt. ix. 1; Acts xxviii. 4. The Bible teaches us otherwise. Trouble is often the test to purify and manifest true virtue. Where would be the "examples of suffering affliction and of patience," if they are not often "to be accounted happy who endure?" James v. 10, 11. ¶ *Except ye repent.* Unless you change that hardness of heart, that now induces you to come to Me with this news that you may entrap Me in My words and do Me harm, ye shall meet the same fate. They suffered, for a warning to you, that you may repent of the evil which is in your hearts. ¶ *All likewise perish.* The word *likewise* is emphatic. Ye shall perish in a manner similar to their death. This was remarkably fulfilled. These Galileans perished in the temple at a sacrifice. Josephus tells us that under Cumanus twenty-five thousand Jews perished in the temple at the feast of the Passover; that under Florus there was a multifarious slaughter of them, fighting in the temple, that many of the zealots perished in the temple, and washed the holy ground with their blood, and that when Titus fought against the temple, a multitude of dead bodies lay round the altar, and the blood ran down the steps of the temple, and many perished in the ruins of the towers or porches.

4. *The tower of Siloam.* Some spacious building near the pool of Siloam had, as they knew, fallen and destroyed eighteen persons. The fountain of Shiloah was near the foot of Mount Zion. Two pools of water were supplied from it, the upper and the lower. Neh. ii. 13; Is. vii. 3; xxii. 9. There were large porches around one of these pools, wherein many sick lay. On some occasion some building had fallen upon certain persons there and destroyed them. Towers, in the Greek use of the word, were not always lofty, fortified buildings, but sometimes such as were conspicuous from standing apart.

6. *This parable.* This similitude. See Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ *Vineyard.* A place of vines. Isaiah and David use a parable like this to describe the Jewish people. Ps. lxxx. 5; Is. v. Our Lord applies the same truths by the idea of a fig-tree, growing in a sheltered field, and protected and carefully nursed, but fruitless.

7. *The dresser of the vineyard.* The one whose duty it was to take care of the vines. ¶ *These three years.* Many writers have supposed these three years to refer to the three years of our Sa-

er of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it:*

9 And if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 ¶ And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was

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viour's ministry, but erroneously. For if the first number describes exactly three years, the last year ought to be explained in the same manner, whereas it must be extended to the long space of time which transpired after the crucifixion until the destruction of Jerusalem, about thirty years after. We will do better to explain it as simply teaching, that the owner of the fig-tree had come to visit it often enough to assure him that in the natural course of things it was barren. Increased culture might help it, but left to itself, it had failed to bear fruit. God had waited patiently on the Jewish nation for the fruits of righteousness. One more period was now set for them to avoid the punishment of their sins. ¶ *Why cumbereth it the ground?* It not only took up room which might be more profitably filled by a fruitful tree, but it cumbered the ground by taking away from the vines the light and moisture which were necessary to their growth. The parable is often profitably applied by ministers to the false professor of piety, who not only fills a place in the spiritual vineyard which could be better occupied, but also brings barrenness among the sincere followers of Christ, by a cold and inconsistent heart and life. He not only injures his own soul, but is a stumbling-block in the way of others. The Lord offers him space for repentance, and often gives him more earnest care by providences and persuasions applied to him, but if he still continue barren of the fruits of the Spirit, He then leaves him to a reprobate mind, or cuts him off from the number of the faithful. It is the duty of the elders and bishops of the Church to maintain a godly discipline after this model of justice tempered by patience and mercy, for the protection of the faithful Christians and the honor of God. And all faithful people should desire to see this discipline preserved, and pray for those who have it to do, that they may execute without pride, fear, or favor. Heb. xiii. 9, 17.

11. *A spirit of infirmity.* By a sore disease, which was produced by the malign influences of an evil spirit. v. 16. It is clear from Scripture that many diseases are suffered to attack men for their sins, sometimes with, sometimes without the appearance of what are called natural causes. ¶ *Eighteen years.* For a long time. The disease could not have been for an instant doubtful. All knew, or could know, that she was truly oppressed by this complaint. No one would feign for that long time, and no one could doubt the power which released her by one word from her infirmity.

12. *Called her to Him, and said.* The two words show that the miracle was done publicly. Many were worshipping in the synagogue. This poor woman was in her place among other women, praying to God. Jesus summons her to Him. They observed Him as He did it. The ruler of the synagogue saw it. The miracle was evident to all, and it was most merciful. Probably this woman had been brought to a sense of her sins by trouble, and had repented sincerely for them. She may have prayed often for pardon. In a moment when she little expects it, God hears her prayer, and releases her beyond her expectation from her disease. Pray then, pray without ceasing, for God knows best when to answer prayer,

bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he [a]laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath-day, and said unto the people, [b]There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not[c] on the sabbath-day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?

a Mark 16. 18; Acts 9. 17. *b* Ex. 20. 9. *c* Matt. 12. 10; Mark 3. 2.

and how to answer it. ¶ *Thou art loosed.* Striking at the root of the evil, Jesus looses the bond of sin, and the woman is healed. How often prayers are directed to the disease and not to the sin—to the effect, not the cause.

13. *Glorified God.* She showed her faith by her gratitude. Often we are left to infer a true faith by the fruits of it. Faith is in the heart; we cannot see it. Proofs of it in gratitude, penitence, love, obedience, manifest its existence to men.

14. *Answered with indignation.* It was his duty to take care that all things were done decently and in order in the services of the synagogue. Surely there was no occasion for this rebuke. The woman did not *come* there to be cured, for Jesus called her to Him. And could there be a better or more glorious service offered to Jehovah, than for His synagogues to be honored by such miracles of mercy, done by one word and one gesture? There was no labor, no toil. This haughty man did not dare to rebuke Jesus, and therefore speaks his reproof to the people. Alas for a people when their priests are unfaithful. They not only do not show the way of life, but seek to hinder them from finding it. They who are set as guides to others in religion, should carefully walk according to the directions of the Scripture, and, while opposing fanaticism, seek to observe all things which God has therein commanded

15. *Thou hypocrite.* He said one thing and thought another. He envied the Saviour, and desired to injure His influence; but not daring to show it, he pretended a most pious care of the Sabbath. This is hypocrisy—a sin hateful to God—opposed to every thing like a simple and childlike piety. ¶ *Stall.* A place where cattle are kept. How wonderful the wisdom that confutes all gainsayers by such simple, plain arguments.

16. *A daughter of Abraham.* A true descendant of the patriarch. The contrast is increased by this phrase. The Jews held all who were of their race, in peculiar honor. Could they on the day of rest water their cattle, mere dumb beasts, and yet condemn one who loosed the weary bonds of one of the true seed, whom Satan had bound? Thus easily is hypocrisy silenced by a godly sincerity. Thus does God "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings perfect His praise, because of His enemies, that He may silence the enemy and the avenger." See Ps. viii. 2; Matt. xxi. 16. A true heart is the best wisdom. ¶ *Whom Satan hath bound.* The word Satan means simply, *an enemy*. Here it signifies *the* adversary, who by a bad eminence has deserved it. The Jews believed, and as the Scrip-

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 ¶ Then said he, [a]Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden, and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

a Matt. 13. 34. ‖ See Matt. 13. 33.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 [b]And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 ¶ [c]Strive to enter in at the

b Matt. 9. 35. *c* Matt. 7. 13.

ture shows rightly, that evil spirits of different ranks were suffered to afflict men. And by painful observation they had arrived at certain just conclusions, by which they could determine the nature of the possession. 2 Sam. xvi. 14, 15; Job i. 12; ii. 7. These possessions and inflictions generally coöperated with natural causes. In our age it is a stratagem of the wicked one, to induce men to doubt whether there ever were such evils. We now call all things of the kind, *natural causes*, and often venture to deny the possibility of spiritual agencies. We should be wary and fear when called to observe such cases. There is no evidence that Satan has not great power over men, reaching by a more indirect chain of causes, but still by one as complete as of old, to the whole man, soul and body. Moral evils are still produced by his agency—vice, drunkenness, and the like. Diseases follow them by a certain bond. We venture too much, when we deny that he has any evil influence beyond this. Our ignorance, in view of these matters, and our mad-houses and hospitals, spirit-rappings and Mormonisms, manifest enough to make us modest.

17. *Adversaries.* Many of the rulers and Pharisees were at this time hostile to the Lord Jesus, and were plotting His destruction. ¶ *All the people.* The common people, who for the most part heard Him gladly. Matt. xii. 37. But, fickle and unreasoning, they were easily deluded by their rulers. Some of them believed and were constant, but the greater part of them were blown about by one side or the other, according as the hope of advantage or the passing fancy moved them. Our Saviour did not trust Himself to them, and His servants do ill, when they lean upon the breath of popular favor, instead of the truth of God. Jesus was not elated by their praise; He did not show surprise at their condemnation; but pointed His rebukes at those who guided them—the rulers and Pharisees.

18–21. See notes, Matt. xiii. 31–33.

22. *Journeying toward Jerusalem.* Our Lord makes a fourth circuit through the villages and towns of Galilee, previous to His going up to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, which happened in October. This was the summer and fall before the Passion. His life began to be in danger from the malice of enemies, but He still went forward in His work with diligence, as one whose time grows short.

23. *Then said one.* One of our Saviour's hearers, who was meditating upon His declarations concerning the kingdom of heaven, that it was like a tree with great branches, in which the

strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When[a] once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to [b]knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say,

a Ps. 32. 6; Is. 55. 6.

b Matt. 25. 10.

fowls of the air lodged, and such like parables, and perceived that He was speaking of spiritual salvation, now asked Him this question: *Are there few that be saved?* or many? He was desirous of knowing. The Jews are said to have had many curious theories on this subject. Some supposed all Israelites would be saved; others, that very few would escape, as of all who came out of Egypt, but two entered Canaan. We need not go to such notions to find the reasons for the question. It is natural to all. Many Christians, even, seem to build their faith on some imagination of the kind, if we judge by their sectarian zeal and personal indifference. Few seem to get beyond this, and learn that their great business here is to labor for their own salvation, without regard to this doubt. Half the bitterness of sect-bigotry among us would die, if each one would lay this answer to heart.

24. *Strive.* Our Lord answers not the question but the crowd. All of you strive to enter heaven. Literally *agonize*, not as our word means with *agony*, but with the utmost possible exertion. The word was sometimes used to describe the violent exertions of the racers and wrestlers in the games of the amphitheatre, who put forth every exertion to win the race, or to conquer their opponents. The Christian puts forth every effort of mind and spirit to accomplish the end of his faith, as a brave and enduring soldier (Eph. vi. 10–18), as a patient and laborious racer. Heb. xii. 1–3. ¶ *Strait gate.* See Matt. vii. 13, 14. ¶ *Will seek to enter in.* Will wish and seek in a wavering and unsteady manner, or will seek for a while and then give over their effort. This word implies all such seeking as falls short of this one state of mind described in the word *strive*. ¶ *Shall not be able.* All men can be saved, if they use the right means in the right manner. No one is deprived of ability by God, until they have cast away their time and opportunities. Recall the story of the foolish virgins. They could not enter in at last; not because they had been put in an inferior condition by God, but because they had failed to do what they plainly could have done, if they had been prudent. We learn from this precept, 1. That Christians are not to be curiously spying into those things which are beyond their power. The number of the saints is not made known. 2. They are to be diligent to secure their own salvation, and bend all their energies to that, with the full assurance that all who strive thus will succeed. 3. The number of the elect is not revealed as defined by any secret decree of God. Revelation teaches us that God will have all men to be saved. If any are lost, it is against His will, though compatible with His laws.

25. *When once the Master.* The figure of a wedding-feast is still preserved. The guests are called. The doors are left open for their entrance. The servants are sent out to call them. They come. The feast begins, and when all have been allowed proper time to enter, the bridegroom—the master of the Christian household—arrives, and shuts the door upon those who refused or were too indolent to come. See notes, Matt. xxii. 12; xxv. 11, 12. Death closes the time of probation for most men. The Judgment will close it for all.

26. *We have eaten.* "We have heretofore been known as your friends, and have received favors from you, and thought ourselves most respectable Christians." This is the cry of sinners

We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last, which shall be first: and there are first, which shall be last.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I

in the Church, false Christians, who have enjoyed the privileges of the Christian covenant on earth without doing its duties. Though there is no allusion here to the Sacrament, it certainly signifies those who have seemed to be Christians. See Matt. vii. 22, 23. This class are described in the XXIXth Article of Religion as "the wicked and such as be void of a lively faith,"—meaning unfaithful communicants. ¶ *In Thy presence.* In the Church on earth, where is the more immediate presence of the last Judge. Matt. xviii. 20. ¶ *Thou hast taught.* All the privileges of the Christian Church were theirs. They heard the word preached; joined in all the external ordinances, yea, even wrought miracles in the name of Christ; preached to others; were useful by natural gifts of eloquence, yet, after all, were castaways. "This refers," says St. Cyril, "to the Israelites, who offered victims to God, eat and drank, heard the books of Moses, in which were the words of God." Says Theophylact: "These things also apply to Christians. For we eat the body of Christ and drink His blood, as often as we approach the mystic table, and He teaches in the streets of our souls, which are ready to receive Him." The Church, without our holiness, has no power to save us, but will sink us lower into hell.

27. See Matt. vii. 23.

28–30. See Matt. viii. 11, 12.

31. *Came certain of the Pharisees.* With an appearance of friendship, but in reality upon the wicked suggestion of Herod. He had slain John the Baptist, and was jealous of the influence which Jesus had gained over the people. They followed Him in great numbers, and many supposed that He would at some favorable juncture proclaim Himself King and set up His banners. Herod dared not incense the people by putting Him to death. He therefore adopted this plan of sending the Pharisees to Him, to induce Him to leave Galilee and hasten to Jerusalem, there to be in greater danger from the Sanhedrim. ¶ *Herod.* Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. He had now ruled over Galilee and Perea for thirty years.

32. *Tell that fox.* The fox is very sly and artful, especially in avoiding danger—by its instinctive sagacity often baffling the most skilful hunters and dogs. Such was the character of this plan of Herod's for avoiding danger from Jesus, and it was in reference to it that he was called a fox. Herod is said to have fashioned himself much upon the model of his master, the Emperor Tiberius, who is described as a man of the most curious habits of dissembling his real purposes, never meaning to act according to his words, and keeping friends and foes constantly at fault as to his wishes. Hebrew prophets were wont to rebuke openly the highest men, so that Jesus does not depart from the authorized style of speech

cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third *day* I shall be [a]perfected.

33 Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O [b]Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, [c]your house is left unto you desolate. And verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, [d]Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

a Heb. 2. 10. b Matt. 23. 37. c Lev. 26. 31, 32; Ps. 69. 25; Is. 1. 7; Dan. 9. 27; Mic. 3. 12.

CHAPTER XIV.

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees, to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched him.

2 And, behold, there was a cer-

d Ps. 118. 26; Matt. 21. 9.

in this plain reproof of the tetrarch. ¶ *Behold, I cast out devils.* One miracle is mentioned in place of all, as if He had said, I shall continue to work miracles during a set time, without fear. ¶ *To-day and to-morrow.* The time was to be very short, not literally for two days only, but so short that Herod could wait. During the time set for Him by the counsels of Heaven to work, He would continue to do so; and foretelling publicly His own death, He prevents Herod from having any just fear that He was about to excite sedition. ¶ *The third day.* In a very short time. Soon after this Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles, and was seen no more in Galilee. From Jerusalem He went through Samaria and Galilee to the regions beyond Jordan. ¶ *I shall be perfected.* By death. He was soon to be offered in sacrifice to God, and perfected, made a perfect propitiation for the sins of the whole world. See Heb. ii. 10. It was usual with the ancients to use some other word when speaking of death. With the Son of Man death was being made perfect.

33. *I must walk.* He declares that during the short remaining term of His ministry, He was bound to fulfil a higher counsel than any advice of Herod's could dictate. For these three days, this brief time, He must act according to His own pleasure, and would not consult the fears of other men. ¶ *For it cannot be, &c.* So cruel and bloody had been the conduct of His countrymen towards their religious teachers, that it was beyond probability that a prophet could perish out of Jerusalem. Therefore Jesus could not feel any fear of the malice of Herod. He knew exactly how his hands were tied, by a fear of offending the people of Galilee. Jesus could easily have excited sedition. He gave assurance to Herod, that He had no such design, but looked rather to a brief ministry, and a bloody end. A prophet was tried only by the Sanhedrim, which met in the capital city. Jesus foretold that He should be tried by that body. He was sentenced by them on a charge for blasphemy, for making Himself the Son of God.

34, 35. See Matt. xxii. 37–39.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Chief Pharisees.* One of the Pharisees who was a member of the great council of the nation, the Sanhedrim. He was a man of distinction, and probably wished to satisfy himself concerning Jesus. ¶ *On the sabbath-day.* The Jews were accustomed to meet as families in social converse on the Sabbath and other holy days. They thought it proper and lawful to spend part of

tain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go:

5 And answered them, saying, Which of [a]you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath-day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden,

[a] Ex. 23. 5; Deut. 22. 4.

their time on that day in quiet, innocent conversation. See Neh. viii. 10; Tobit ii. 1. A due reverence for God's holy day is removed from fanaticism and laxity. Our Lord hesitated not to accept this invitation, in compliance with the customs of the people. They who watched Him, would at once have cavilled at the act, if it had been unusual. For though on a journey, He was yet entertained in some other house, which was for the time His home. But while with this company, He spent the time in religious converse and in doing good. True religion consists not in rigid observances, but in maintaining a consistent and even walk and conversation. Dinner parties and festivities on Sundays are sinful for two reasons. 1. That they compel servants to a prejudicial amount of labor. 2. That they are given by such as value such things unduly and use them sensually. Let the heart be right, and the actions will be right. Love God and His service, and that service will be the one great delight of the Lord's day, sanctifying any innocent recreation. ¶ *Watched Him.* Observed Him closely as spies; bent on finding fault, if He violated any of the customs or rules of the nation.

2. *Was a certain man before Him.* These words imply that he was there by the design of those who watched Jesus. He did not come, or appear after a time, but was put there to meet Him. It is not likely that the man was privy to this fraud, as Jesus did not blame him, but healed him. ¶ *Dropsy.* A disease produced by an accumulation of water under the skin, in various parts of the body, often the result of a previous disease, and generally incurable.

3. *And Jesus answering.* Answering their expectation or design, as if it had been expressed in words. The difficulty in which He was placed was this. If He healed the man at once, they were ready to cavil concerning His *laboring* on the Sabbath. If He did not heal him, they would trumpet it abroad as a failure, or a sign of fear. ¶ *Is it lawful, &c.* They could only answer yea. Certain things *must* be done on the day of rest. Sickness, natural exigencies constantly compel men to work. We must work, when it is to heal.

4. *They held their peace.* They could not say no, they would not say yes. How hateful is the malice of the evil heart; especially when manifested by those whose superior rank or intellect give them power to do great evil. How lovely in contrast what St. Paul says to us: "I would have you *wise unto that which is good, simple concerning evil.*" Rom. xvi. 19.

5. *Which of you, &c.* See ch. xiii. 15. The animal in the pit would perish. There could be no delay. Works of necessity and mercy are lawful at all times.

7. *A parable.* A truth drawn from one thing to form their characters in other particulars, or as we may say, a precept teaching humility as its moral. ¶ *Chief rooms.* See Matt. xxiii. 6. Vanity is a secret or open passion with almost all men. It was at that our Lord strikes in all its phases. We smile to think of these Jews, so plainly showing the feeling of vainglory. A writer on Abyssinia states that those simple semi-savages are guilty of a greater absurdity. They talk of their own greatness, valor, beauty, &c., before the largest

when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 [a]But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 [b]For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him

a Prov. 25. 6, 7. *b* Job 22. 29; Ps. 18. 27; Prov. 29. 23; Jas. 4. 6; 1 Pet. 5. 5.

assemblies with great delight. We civilized people are cautious, but not humble. Fashion, show, and the like, offer inventions which gild over the evil. Grace alone can eradicate it, and often, alas, can do so only after the severest trials. As the writer calls it a parable, suppose it worded thus: "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a feast, in which each guest took the lowest place, until called by the master to the place suited to him; while some who sought their own honor, were put down in a lower seat to their shame. For the law of that kingdom is as in v. 11."

8. *Highest room.* The most conspicuous place at the table. Literally, the chief place of reclining at table, usually the middle place on the middle couch. ¶ *Of him.* By the host. He had the arranging of the seats, and would know how to rank his guests. In the Church the Lord alone knows the whole work which is to be done, and who is best suited to each part. How foolish, nay, faithless is it in the Christian to rush into places of trust and honor, not waiting to ask what God will have him do. The law of the Christian must be to submit all to the will of God. He sometimes shows us but one step of duty; but always shows at least one. And we can take but one at a time. If we will suffer it, He will fix our places, and fit us for them, far better than we can do for ourselves.

10, 11. *Shalt thou have worship.* Shalt have due honor. Pride and a haughty spirit come before a fall. How foolish the Pharisees! The Jews made the proper seating of guests a matter of importance. Who could know where each should sit? Not each guest. But by a wise host no one would be neglected; while any one presuming too much would be the more likely to be slighted and ridiculed. From this circumstance, there exemplified before their eyes, Jesus draws out the law of His kingdom. The Christian who gives up his own will, and resolutely humbles himself to obedience to Christ, will become the more useful, and God will honor him. The one who cherishes a trust in himself, and is vainglorious (and all glory in self is vain), will be neglected. He may be popular and renowned, but not with the glory of bearing much fruit unto God.

12. *Call not thy friends.* This was addressed to one person, the Pharisee who had given the dinner, and is, perhaps, the counterpart of the foregoing precept. The master of the feast had, of course, his seat fixed, and was free from this temptation for the time. Perhaps he exulted over his companions, and applauded himself for having no such vain thoughts. To lay bare his heart, Jesus speaks to him in particular—"When you would be charitable, humble, religious, as a chief of the Pharisees should be, it must be in a different manner from this dinner, given

that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call [a]the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind;

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall [b]eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 [c]Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that

a Neh. 8. 10, 12.

b Rev. 19. 9. *c* Matt. 22. 2.

to your friends. This is only a matter of social life; well in itself; and proper as a social custom. But to justify the self-gratulation which you now feel, you must act by another rule from this!" Jesus does not forbid the innocent, social usages of society; but He condemns the common error, that these usages are substitutes for piety. Give dinners, if you will, to friends, but do not suppose that by so doing you are ranked as a charitable man. ¶ *A recompense.* They will do the same, and there it ends exactly as an honorable business transaction. You love society, you shine in it, are witty, beautiful, ostentatious. Men visit you, admire, flatter, caress you. You get a recompense for your trouble. It is not self-denial or humility that is gained in such a course of life.

13. *A feast.* A supper or dinner. Jesus would not have us give the poor and maimed *feasts*, for it would be, in most cases, to mock their misery; but He inculcates the lesson of charity and humility from the scene before Him. A man exerting himself to feed the poor, as the Pharisee to entertain his guests, from true pity to the poor, would have been an humble man. Bless the poor in a discreet manner, and the spirit of this precept is fulfilled. ¶ *The maimed.* Those who have lost a limb in some way which disables them from making a living.

14. *At the resurrection of the just.* At the day of judgment, when the just or righteous shall rise from the dead. Then the Righteous Judge will give to every man according to his deeds. Those who have, by a true faith in Him, blessed the poor and needy, shall then receive infinite blessings in recompense. Matt. xxv. 40; 1 Tim. vi. 17–19. The unselfish and charitable believers in Christ shall then receive their reward in that resurrection where will be found multitudes of the poor of this world.

15. *Blessed is he that shall eat bread, &c.* He who shall join that feast, and enjoy all the privileges of that kingdom which the Messiah will establish. One feasting before the king, is one enjoying the highest favor with Him. This man, hearing of the resurrection of the just, supposed it to signify the speedy beginning of that *temporal* kingdom of the Messiah, which most of the Jews were then anticipating, and at the beginning of which the saints were to rise again. They would be kings and princes in it over the Gentiles; would receive riches and honor. Ah, glorious Jews! His mind was carnal. He did not understand the words of Jesus, of the blessed spiritual rewards of heaven, but of a reward in kind here on earth. They who had feasted the poor and maimed, he supposed would themselves eat the bread and receive the wages of a temporal prince. Jesus corrects these false notions in the following parable.

16. *A great supper.* The figure of a supper is still continued, in order to

were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife: and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and

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teach another truth. It was not the way of our Lord to contradict, by opposing assertions, those things which were said to Him by ignorance or mistake; but rather to build on the truth which might be expressed in the mistake, an illustration which would correct the error, and lift the thoughts of His hearers to a new and better view. This hearer spake of eating bread in the Messiah's kingdom, as if all Jews were to do this by right of birth. Jesus takes the words from him, to lift his mind to a better kingdom, into which he was invited. See a like parable, Matt. xxii. 1–14. The Gospel dispensation—the Church, is here described as a supper.

17. *Sent his servant.* The Jewish custom was to invite guests beforehand, and make all proper arrangements. At the very hour, a servant was sent, not to invite so much as to signify to them that the feast was ready. It was, therefore, unpardonable, that such guests should break their promise of coming.

18. *Began to make excuse.* It is not usual for men to desire absence from such scenes. Therefore the wickedness of the conduct of men who refuse the invitations of the Gospel, is more strikingly brought out. We are only too eager to run to places of festivity—but the heavenly dainties, the supply of all the wants of the soul, we neglect for unreasonable excuses. ¶ *I have bought, &c.* Would the ground be gone, or the bargain lost, if he delayed a little? No. But as a child will see a new treasure or toy, so he is elated by a gain, and must hasten to look at it, and feel it his own. This excuse and the next apply to the men who now suffer business in temporal things to serve as an excuse from religious duties. "They have the cares of this life upon their hands, and in their hearts too, with which they are so occupied, that there is no room left for the thoughts of another life to come."—*Bp. Beveridge.*

20. *I have married a wife.* This man is more obstinate. Could he not leave her for a little, for a feast? He was excused from war by the Jewish law, but here neither absence nor danger are expected. The use which is made of this parable in the second exhortation of the Prayer Book to the Lord's Supper, deserves notice. "It is an easy thing for a man to say I will not communicate, because I am otherwise hindered with worldly business. But such excuses are not so easily accepted and allowed before God. Consider earnestly with yourselves, how little such feigned excuses will avail before God. Those who refused the feast in the Gospel, because they had bought a farm, or would try their yokes of oxen, or because they were married, were not so excused, but counted unworthy of the heavenly feast."

31. *Go out quickly.* This man was justly indignant, and is resolved that the viands which he has prepared shall be of service to some men, although despised by his intimates. He had intended to be hospitable to his equals. He resolves to turn his slighted feast into charity to the poor. Thus God dealt with man. First, He set him a law by which to be tried. If he obeyed he was to be holy, and come as the rich come to a feast, with a sense of personal merit and dignity. But he failed, and now must get him to pardon and penitence; as the poor, halt, maimed, and blind to such a rich man's table, of mere free grace, beyond any just ex-

shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, that[a] none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26 [b]If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea,[c] and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not[d] bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

a Matt. 21. 43; & 22. 8; Acts 13. 46. *b* Deut. 13. 6; & 33. 9; Mark 10. 37. *c* Rev. 12. 11. *d* 2 Tim. 3. 12.

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pectation, desert, or ability in themselves. And the parable may be explained of the calling of the Jews and Gentiles, as that was itself a typical or symbolic mode of the Divine dealing with the whole race. The Jews, their wise men and Pharisees had been invited, and refused to come. The call then went to the poor and afflicted of the city, Jews still, who would come. Next it would pass these bounds and be extended to all—to the Gentiles.

23. *The highways and hedges.* Travellers in that warm climate would often be found resting under the trees and hedges to refresh themselves after their fatigue. The master of the feast will have strangers, when the city has not store enough of poor people to fill every place of his tables. He will look them up by sending his servants after them. God thus sent His servants out to all the world with the cry—Yet there is room in the Church on earth, by offering to men the terms and ordinances of the Gospel freely; room in the Church above, by preaching the free grace of God to every creature. ¶ *Compel them.* Though this word might have been suited to the parable, and a rich Jew, if a ruler, might have prevented any further refusal, yet in explaining it of the offer of the Gospel, it must be interpreted in harmony with what is taught us in plain terms. The servants of Christ may *urge* or *press* men to repent and be baptized. They cannot compel them to it by force under any plea. It is a wicked spirit which would justify persecution in religion from such words as these.

24. *None of those men, &c.* None who had despised his offer, and held out in their refusal. But even they, if they repented, might doubtless have regained his favor. So this moral of the parable would apply to the Jews, only as they did not repent. For after the call of the Gentiles, the Jews were from time to time converted to the faith. The time when Jesus will speak finally such language will be when the number of the saints is made up, and the time of probation is past.

25–27. See notes, Matt. x. 37, 38.

26. *And hate not.* St. Matthew explains this word in his use of another, saying, "Loveth father or mother *more* than Me." Abraham, when called to leave his father's house, went out, not knowing whither he went. Heb. xi. 8. A missionary turns his back on friends and home. Do they seem to hate them, or not rather to give them up because they love God more than them? "For if for thy sake the Lord renounces His own mother, saying, *Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?* why dost thou

28 For which of [a]you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it*?

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

34 ¶ [b]Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

a Prov. 24. 27. *b* Matt. 5. 13; Mark 9. 50.

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deserve to be preferred to thy Lord? But the Lord will have us neither to be ignorant of nature, nor to be her slaves, but so to submit to nature that we reverence the Author of nature, and depart not from God, out of love to our parents."—*St. Ambrose.*

28. See notes, Matt. xxi. 33. Rich persons in the East often built elegant and costly turrets to their houses. But the allusion is here rather to a tower as a place of defence. No prudent man would begin one unless he had just hopes of completing it. Prudence, foresight, a wise preparation for the future trials of life, and the temptations of our Christian walk, are duties which we must not neglect. Let us see what the cross requires of us in self-denial and sacrifice of the world, lest we fail, and be ashamed for ever.

29. *Haply.* By chance. ¶ *To mock him.* To scoff at him. The Orientals were skilful in this hateful art. The rudest Arab of the desert can now surpass any European in the bitter eloquence of scorn. Is. lvii. 4.

31. *Or what king.* It would be very unwise for any king to run blindfold into inevitable destruction. So Christ will have all men who will take up the cross, be wary and prudent in their undertaking. It is not the part of wisdom in us to enter upon the Christian walk, without a due sense of the trials of the way, and a knowledge of whither we must look for help to overcome our spiritual enemies.

32. *An ambassage.* A number of ambassadors, with presents and powers to treat for peace. This feature of the parable has nothing answering to it in the great question of personal salvation. It is put here as part of a picture, which shows us how a *prudent king* would act. We are to be in like manner prudent in entering and continuing in the service of Christ. Otherwise, trusting to our own resources, or neglecting the powers of evil that tempt us, we shall certainly fall by the way. We fight against spiritual wickedness in high places. Eph. vi. 12. A multitude of enemies oppose the believer, sins, lusts, passions; within, war and struggle; without, a wicked world. Let him see and confess the power of his enemies, and so learn to "fight not as one that beateth the air."

34, 35. See Matt. v. 13; Mark ix. 49. *His savour.* The saline power in all the salt used at that time in Judea was judged of by the taste or savor. Common salt, nowadays, will not lose its taste till it is all used. But that of Judea was largely mixed with a tasteless

CHAPTER XV.

THEN drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and [a]eateth with them.

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep[b] which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one

a Acts 11. 3; Gal. 2. 12.

b 1 Pet. 2. 10. 25.

magnesian earth, and would look perfectly good, when it was actually useless. Thus the Christian professor, who has the form of godliness without the power of it, is fair to the sight in some regards; a tower begun, but unfinished, an army sent to war, but in danger of destruction; salt in appearance, but a savorless, useless earth. Alas for worldly, selfish, passionate, indolent, and self-deceived Christians. Satan allows them to keep up a show of piety, for they are useful to him as stumbling-blocks. And when his occasion is served, they are swept away by false doctrine or evil passions. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

CHAPTER XV.

1. *Publicans and sinners.* See note, Matt. ix. 10. Sinners were vile persons, debauched, thieves, drunkards, and the like. We now use the word more frequently in its relation to the strict justice of God, before whom all have sinned.

2. *Murmured.* They were ashamed of saying it openly to Jesus, and questioned His disciples. It appears from this murmuring, that the religious teachers of the Jews had so entirely mistaken their duty of helping the ignorant and seeking to turn the fallen from the error of their ways, that they had given them up, and believed that God had given them up altogether. They despised them, and murmured at Jesus for the efforts He was making among them. ¶ *Receiveth sinners.* What manner of Messiah was this that took notice of such men—treated them with such respect and cared for their sentiments. In the pride of their hearts they mistook the nature of the New Covenant, and rebelled at the plan of God's mercy in offering men a fountain for sin and uncleanness.

3. *This parable.* See note, Matt. xiii. 3. The two following parables or similitudes show, that as God rejoices over the salvation of sinners, so should religious teachers seek to please Him by promoting it.

4–6. See Matt. xviii. 12.

7. *Joy in heaven.* That joy which angelic beings receive is pure and satisfying, as they see wicked men returning to the right path. They behold a sinner giving up his rebellion, becoming a child of God, and useful to men. They behold the number of the saintly men of earth increased, and look forward to the end with joy, at the new proof of the mercy of God. And as men rejoice over their blessings, when they are rescued from danger, and value health, life, or property the more when they have been put in jeopardy, so the angels find new subjects of joy and praise as each new spirit of man is added to the company of the faithful. ¶ *That repenteth.* That changes the whole tenor of life, and from being a vile criminal, such as publicans were, becomes a righteous person. There is no person on earth who can do without repentance,

sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten [1]pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that fall-

[1] *Drachma* here translated *a piece of silver*, is the 8th part of an oz. which cometh to 7d. halfpenny, and is equal to the Roman penny. Matt. 18. 28.

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and must use it for every sin and for all sins. 1 John i. 8–10. But we must explain this language not of this spiritual repentance, so much as of *the entire change of life* which those whom the Jews called sinners need when they become pious. See the two characters contrasted by David in Ps. xxxvii. ¶ *Just persons.* Strictly there are none, for all have sinned. But in the usual Scriptural sense, there were such men as deserved *from men* this appellative. Noah, Job, Zacharias, Simeon and others were just persons, walking in all the ordinances of the law blameless. Therefore men call them just, righteous, upright. See Gen. vi. 9; Job iv. 1; Ps. xxvii. 12, 37; Lu. ii. 25. But how shall any man be just with God? Job iv. 17. Only by the blood of Christ. Just is here used as contrasted with publicans and sinners. Matt. v. 45. The angels rejoiced to see sinners, and even the vilest of them, reformed by grace and made pure and gentle by the power of religion. And this joy was in a measure unexpected; and therefore appeared by a louder song of joy than that which filled their daily work of ministry to the saints.

8–10. *Ten pieces of silver.* Greek, *ten drachmas.* A silver coin in use at that time among the Romans, in value about 18 cents. The same lesson is taught by this comparison as by the former. What woman but rejoices more over a son or a husband who had been a trial and trouble to her if he reforms again? One who has not tried her heart she loves entirely, constantly; the other painfully and with more apparent feeling. God loves His children who never wander, with a deeper love that they keep close to His law. And our Lord does not attribute to Him the sudden joy which belongs to imperfect creatures.

11. *And he said.* "St. Luke has given three parables successively; the sheep which was lost and found; the piece of silver which was lost and found; the Son who was dead and came to life again, in order that, invited by a threefold remedy, we might heal our wounds. Christ as the shepherd bears thee on His own body; the Church as the woman seeks for thee; God as the Father receives thee—the first, *pity*; the second, *intercession*; the third, *reconciliation.*"—*St. Ambrose.*

12. *And the younger of them.* This parable, like *a theorem*, applies to so many shades of human life that it seems difficult from its abundance. One ancient writer likens the two sons to angels and men; many of the moderns, to Jews and Gentiles; others to Pharisees and publicans; and others still to the faithful and unbelievers. Doubtless the primary application was to the objection which was then in the minds of the Pharisees who murmured at Jesus. He shows them that henceforth reconciliation was to be made with those who had wandered from God. These were both the publicans and the Gentiles. The story applies with singular force to the case of every sinner on earth. ¶ *Of goods.* Of the pater-

eth *to me.* And he divided unto them *his* living.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

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nal estate. ¶ *That falleth to me.* That will be mine at your death. He is supposed by some to have had a legal right to part of his father's property, being then of age. It is doubtful. ¶ *He divided unto them his living.* He gave all. He was generous and loving, and gave more than could have been expected of him. This is not set forth as an example for us to follow, but only as a faint image of that exceeding love of God which has shed abundant blessings on mankind, just and unjust, Jew and Gentile. And *unreasonable* as the act was, it was afterwards *the memory of his father's generous love*, which recalled the fugitive prodigal.

13. *Took his journey.* How like a graceless spendthrift. He cannot give rein to his passions where his father is, but flees to some far country that he may riot unrebuked. A promise was attached to the command to honor our parents, because no child can well become entirely vicious who regards them with reverence. Men left to themselves must desert their heavenly Father's house, before they can become altogether wicked. One sign of a sinner among the Jews was that he was never found in the temple. ¶ *In riotous living.* In all dissolute vices and excess. Eph. v. 18; 1 Pet. iv. 4. Solomon has described this riotous living in the book of Proverbs, those things which "clothe a man with rags." Prov. xxiii. 21, 22. And then the wise man recommends as a safeguard, that hearkening to a father, from which this young sinner had fled.

14. *A mighty famine.* Famines were the terrific scourges of the East. Want of rain in its season, wars, or pestilences were the causes. In ancient times there were no means of relieving the wants of one country by the products of another. When a famine came, provisions were scarce and costly. This youth had spent all his money in evil courses, and finds himself at last a miserable drudge for another man.

15. *Joined himself.* Hired himself out to a citizen of that country. He who could not bear the gentle rule of a father, now serves a stranger. Man rejects the Shiloah of piety, "which goes softly" (Is. viii. 6), and finds the end of his own wisdom to be in slavery to that master whose wages are death. Rom. vi. 23. ¶ *To feed swine.* The lowest occupation to which a Jew could be degraded. It was an unclean animal, an abomination to him. How great the fall, how abject the misery of this one who was the keeper of this hated beast, and even desired to share its vile food! "To feed swine is to work those things in which the unclean spirits delight."—*Bede.* How evil must the sinner's ways be to a pure Being, when He gives such pictures of them!

16. *Would fain.* Would have been glad to do it. ¶ *The husks.* This word generally signifies the covering of grain, a dry and useless substance, which is hardly fit for food for any animal; but it here translates a word of different meaning. The *keration* was the sweetish fruit of a Syrian tree, used for feeding swine and the meanest slaves. The poorest people sometimes depended on it for food. Hence it is called by some, *John's bread*, from a tradition that John the

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to

Baptist lived upon it. It is called also the Carob tree. The swineherd drove his charge out into the fields by day, and at night brought them home to be fed. How gloomy the picture of the tired drudge at night, hungry and neglected, vainly covetous of swine's food. ¶ *No man gave unto him.* Some imagine this to mean, that no one gave him any thing to eat. But his service certainly required some support for his strength. It is better, "no one gave him of the husks" His own food was poorer even than this. The famine was sore, and he starving. In these words we have a picture of utter degradation and misery. It was drawn by the hand of Him who knoweth all that is in man, as an example and warning to the unrepentant and careless.

17. *He came to himself.* He had been mad to all good reason. It was a kind of insanity which his passions had caused, which led him to desert his father, to leave home, to waste his goods upon wicked companions. Now misery cures him. He awakes by it to his wretched state, and—*comes to himself.* How impressive this phrase. Sin is madness. It is common, and therefore unnoticed; but it is an insanity more terrible than that which fills our asylums. It blinds the eyes and destroys the senses to the wages which are before the sinner. Happy is he who comes to himself in time. We see here that sin begets misery, misery a sense of its evil and folly, and these working with the knowledge of the goodness of God, lead to repentance. ¶ *Hired servants.* Such as he then was to a stranger. Only they were servants of a good master—he of a poor or hard one. They had food enough; he was perishing with hunger. He says nothing of *his brother*, his heart is too much crushed by his sorrows and disgrace to seek a comparison with him.

18. *I will arise.* I will set out, begin the journey home at once. He was perhaps sitting down, famished and tired after his day's toil. The thought of his father's love at once sets him on exertion. He is perishing. If he stay longer, he may not have strength to go. He will arise and be gone. ¶ *To my father.* For it was his father that he had deserted—his love that he had fled from. From the fountain of his love alone can he now look for compassion. These words are set in the daily service of the Prayer Book, as the fit expression of the great band of sinners and penitents who meet to seek the presence of God. How beautiful the comparison. How fit the words are for our lips, who are struggling upwards through a barren desert to reach our Father's home. They are the fit expression of every penitent sinner. Let him use them with heart and soul in prayer, that God will receive him, and in earnest resolution that he will seek His grace until he find it. ¶ *I have sinned.* He offers no plea for pardon.* He had been criminal and ungrateful, had neglected his parent, and despised the law of his youth. ¶ *Against Heaven.* Against God in heaven, who had commanded him to honor his father. No sin can be committed against the authority of parents, but it is also against God. And every sinner, when he comes to true spiritual repentance, feels that it is specially against God that his sins have been committed. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight," said the penitent Psalmist (Ps. li. 4), though in a lower sense he had done wrong to Uriah, and been the cause of his child's death. It is only when contrasted with Divine perfection that we see how far sin has defiled the image of God in us. This young man showed love to his pious father, when

be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But [a]when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

a Acts 2. 29; Eph. 2. 13, 17.

he manifested to him the sense of his guilt before the God whom his father served. ¶ *Before thee.* In thy presence. I have grieved and wronged thee. The sense is the same as if he had said, against thee.

19. *No more worthy.* This was true; he had not shown the love and reverence of a child. He had reasonably forfeited all claim to support as a son in those times of difficulty; an ungrateful sinner, who had remained among strangers until mere misery and hunger brought him to his senses. ¶ *Make me as one, &c.* Treat me as a servant. Suffer me to labor for my food, and to be sustained by thee. It was a deep settled humility. It showed a returning sense of his duty, of his past folly, and yet under all, his love to his father, that he could desire to serve in the family where he had once ruled as a son. Parents, grieving and praying over a prodigal son, is there not a comfort for you in the fact of this boy's memory of his father's love underlying all his sins, and leading him at last to repentance?

20. *He arose, and came.* The resolve was his faith—this, his works. Too many say with him, who do not act accordingly. But they who diligently do as they say, receive a blessing. It was *a far country.* It took days to pass the lands between. On he goes, without stopping, anxious, hoping, trembling, until he sees his father's home appearing in the distance. ¶ *A great way off.* As he was coming, and now weary and dusty with his journey—in rags, poor and starved—only a father's instinct could have seen a son in the distant beggar. Only God's love can pass man's sins and save him when in the ruined state of nature. ¶ *And ran.* There are few things on earth sublimer than the love of a pious parent, few more hateful than the coldness of a selfish one. This old man forgives all, hastens, nay, so far forgets the dignity of age, that he runs to meet and help the poor sinner, whose face, set homewards, pleads for and pardons all the past. ¶ *And kissed him.* True love forgives entirely when it pardons. It kisses, embraces the dusty invalid, and thinks only of the answering love which fills his heart. It is to be noted, that in the two former parables our Lord described the joy as of the angels; here He shows the love of the Infinite Father toward the sinner. And though he makes a feast to welcome the penitent, He does not allow that He feels more love for him than for the elder son, who had been ever with him. This seems a point which is worthy notice. We sometimes hear this and other passages used to the depreciation of early and constant piety, as if there was some mystic merit in a late repentance. It is far better never to wander. The son who wandered had *lost* by it; his goods were gone. The one who remained had part in all—in fact, was possessor by inheritance of all.

22. *The best robe.* Changes of raiment were made of great account by the Orientals, and were often handed down from one generation to another. The young man was in rags. His sire will give him no mean robe, but one honorable, to raise his mind again to his station. ¶ *A ring on his hand.*

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it;* and let us eat, and be merry:

24 [a]For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him.

29 And he answering, said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

a Eph. 2. 1; & 5. 14; Rev. 3. 1.

A visible mark to all of his father's favor. It was a pledge of his future love. See Gen. xli. 42; Esther viii. 2. ¶ *Shoes on his feet.* Servants were not allowed to wear them. He had asked to be treated as a servant—he is honored by this mark as a son.

23. *The fatted calf.* It is usual still in the East, as it has been since the age of Abraham (Gen. xviii. 7), to honor meeting of friends in this manner. A feast is made to refresh the wanderer. That he may see the sincerity of the welcome, the material provided is of the best. How tender the love that anticipates the trembling fear of the son, and prevents any suspicion of the joy of his return. All must be merry on this happy event, and the past is buried for ever.

24. *Was dead.* He was the same as dead, so long as he had been absent. He was lost to his duties towards the family, lost to their affections. The father shows in these words his justice. Only in this manner does he speak of the past. So with the unrepentant sinner. He is an exile from the home of his soul which is found only in a conscience at peace with God; he is dead in trespasses and sins. And if he does not repent, he is regarded so to the end. Eph. ii. 1, 5; Col. ii. 13. ¶ *Was lost.* As the sheep who had wandered away in the darkness, which was found again by the shepherd.

25. *In the field.* He was absent at the time of his brother's return to the house. The Pharisees could now see the wrong of their conduct in murmuring at Jesus. They had murmured in this way at Him for welcoming publicans and sinners. And herein, too, is insinuated the reproof of the same pride of the Jews, which would oppose the admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of Christ. There is not or ought not to be any likeness in the case of pious men in seeing sinners reforming. They rejoice and thank God for such mercies. ¶ *Music and dancing.* The usual sounds of festivity. They are here used to symbolize the joy which is felt in the kingdom of God, over those who repent. No opinion is expressed by the words concerning them, whether innocent or not.

29. *Make merry with.* How churlish was this resentment. Yet such was the conduct of the Pharisees in the sight of God. If they were righteous and friends of God, then He had always loved them, and had given them proof of it. It would have been a joy, not a grief to them, that Jesus sought to call sinners to repentance. The father had given the elder son every thing, and would have really seemed to diminish

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said

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his own gift, if he had selected some part of it to give over again.

30. *Hath devoured thy living.* Wasted your property, with which he ought to have supported you. Anger is unreasonable, and man in his folly cannot fathom the mercy of God. God gives pardon to the penitent—even to the worst sinners. Had man been the one to regulate the laws of religion, how hard would he have made terms for all but a few. And how ready are many even now to restrict the free grace of God, and confine it to certain channels within the walls of a sect or some stern relentless orthodoxy.

31. *All I have is thine.* He had divided it between them at the first. So at the beginning God had given His peculiar blessings to the Jews. They had every token of His love. They cavilled at the same mercy, when it embraced others. Two remarks are worthy of note. 1. "It is a great mistake to suppose that a *constant obedience is not to be preferred, even to the most sincere and active repentance*, and that God will more love and honor the latter than the former. The contrary to this is clearly implied in the parable. 'Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.' The father who rejoiced so greatly at the return of the prodigal, yet in his sedate judgment makes a wide difference between the penitent and the innocent son. The greater the obedience, the greater will be the reward with God; the more that has been done and suffered for the sake of God, the more honor will be the consequence. The penitent son will then find rest and peace to his soul, and receive his reward, but not a reward equal to that of the son who never departed from his father."—*Dr. Jortin.* 2. "Let the sinner, whom the chastening hand of God has brought to himself, let such an one listen to the admonitions of conscience, and cherish the first dawnings of Divine grace in his heart: so that the sun of righteousness, then arising, may disperse every cloud, and cause every shadow to flee away. Let him know, to his great and endless comfort, that upon his sincere repentance, the Lord shall arise upon him and His glory shall be seen upon him. Let him only follow the example of the returning prodigal, and he will not fail of his reward, even reconciliation and peace, love, joy, and rejoicing in the house of his heavenly Father."—*Bp. Horne.*

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *And He said.* Having silenced the murmuring of the Pharisees, by the three foregoing parables, Jesus continues in their hearing His discourse upon the evils of that great sin into which so many of them had fallen—into which all are in danger of falling, who are not spiritually wise—the love of money, and the dishonest use of privileges granted by God for the common good. This steward was set over others for *their good*; he abused his trust for his own selfish gratification. His evil end is shown as a rebuke and a warning. It is a rebuke to those Pharisees, whose consciences told them that they had not sought to benefit these same publicans and sinners. It is a warning to the disciples who were to be the religious teachers in the Messiah's kingdom, that they should not love the mammon

unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of

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of unrighteousness, but use it in such wise, that they might benefit the poor and ignorant. At the same time the teaching of this chapter was instructive to the publicans, and others, who had abused their trusts, and sinned against God by oppression and extortion. ¶ *A steward.* Not so much an officer to provide the food of the household, as one subordinate to the rich man, collecting his revenues, and managing the business of his tenantry. The English call such an one a bailiff—others, an *overseer.* This individual collected rents, and was treasurer and accountant of the affairs of the lord—an office of important trust. He was steward for the honest management of his lord's income, and the benefit of those placed under him. Such is the position spiritually of teachers of religion. When they forget that they are only stewards for the common good, they may be warned by this parable. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; 1 Pet. iv. 10. ¶ *Was accused.* Privately by the tenants or servants.

2. *Give an account.* Give a full statement of all the rents and accounts, in order that this charge may be examined. This command was fatal to him, because his dishonesty and private squandering of his lord's property would appear. We see from this circumstance, that his office was to collect yearly rents, which, in the East, to this day are collected in kind. ¶ *No longer steward.* The charge was so probably true, he would at any rate displace him. Did this refer to the Pharisees? Was not Jesus then calling them to account, at not finding "faith in Israel," as a result of their teaching? The office was soon to be taken from them and given to others.

3. *Said within himself.* Made up his mind what he would do. ¶ *I cannot dig.* This would be to descend from a post of trust to a life of labor—certainly the most praiseworthy course for him. But luxury had made him too tender of himself—pride prevented his mixing with other servants as an equal, after having ruled over them so long. How often, alas, is honest labor despised for gainful dishonesty! ¶ *To beg I am ashamed.* Even this was better than lying. But the luxuriant waster had nursed his pride withal, and he will not be ashamed to cheat, though too modest to beg. Worldly men act so still. They will cheat and lie, and owe money, and resort to every unworthy stratagem to avoid payment, rather than seem poor. Extravagance and waste in the young, are almost certain to bring on them dishonesty and knavery in age,

4. *I am resolved what to do.* He acted on a deliberate plan, and went coolly about his dishonesty. Let no one fear on reading this to condemn heartily his villainy, for our Lord does not approve it, though his lord did in a qualified sense. He acted wickedly, though very *cunningly,* and now sought to gain a living by showing favors when he had no right to do so, in order to escape the evils of his former sins. He was a villain; a very cunning one, but the more of one for his cool sagacity in accomplishing his purpose. ¶ *They may receive me.* As a verbal parallel lies between these words and verse 9th, it is important to see how far the similarity extends. The steward, as such, could lighten the rents of the tenantry, and could do them that much good. He had no right to do it, but it was a skilful dishonesty. They would receive him, so as to keep from the knowledge of their lord the fact of the diminishing of his revenue; and the landlord

his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred ‖measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children

‖ The word *Batus* in the original containeth 9 gallons 3 qts. See Ez. 45. 10, 11, 14. ‖ The word here interpreted *a measure*, in the original containeth about 14 bushels and a pottle.

when he discovered it, though the loser, praised the cunning prudence of the dishonest man as a skilful knavery. So the Christian teacher may use his trust, not to be put out of it—but in it, by honestly doing good with the Church revenues and alms to the poor, that "they"—either the poor or the angels, may receive him into heaven. Jesus has no praise for dishonesty; and he is a dishonest reader of Scripture who thinks it.

5. *Called every one.* Privately—and ostensibly to prepare his account of the revenues. ¶ *Debtors.* Tenants. For the pith of his stratagem must lie in the fact that he relieved them of part of their annual rent. If it had been a single debt, the tenants would have soon tired of supporting him. The fact that an annual burden was removed, would insure their readiness to bribe him to silence.

6. *An hundred measures of oil.* Tenants paid in kind. The measure which is here mentioned, was a *batus*, holding about nine gallons and a half. This was his yearly rent for his land. ¶ *Oil.* Olive oil, the usual fluid signified by this word in Scripture, used for lamps, anointing, and in the toilette. ¶ *Thy bill.* The lease or writing by which they had contracted to rent the land. As the knave was yet steward, he had the power to make the contract binding—at least, so long as the fraud was kept secret; and thus, as it would seem that he had received so much less than he did, he would, perhaps, wipe off the proofs of his previous waste. ¶ *Quickly.* Either he is energetic, and will do it at once, or he hurries, lest his fraud may be anticipated, and the opportunity lost.

7. *Measures.* The *corus*, here called a measure, contained between nine and ten bushels. ¶ *Fourscore.* Four times twenty.

8 *The lord commended.* When he learned it, the landlord, though a sufferer, commended the knave—but as a knave, for his skill. For he calls him the *unjust* steward; and he *dismissed* him, showing his hatred of his dishonesty: yet separating this from all regard of right and wrong, he admired it as a stratagem. Our Lord does not commend his dishonesty, nor use his example, except to urge His disciples to be as wise for good, and for alms and mercy, as he was cunning in dishonesty. ¶ *Had done wisely.* Had been prudent, though selfishly, wrongly so. We say a man is *clear-headed*, and use the word in a sense that admits of its application to a good or bad object. He may be clear-headed for a selfish and very wicked end, or for a good and beneficial one to others. Exactly so was this word *wisely* used by our ancestors on many occasions; and therefore they translated with it the Greek word *Phronimōs*—one *all mindful*, whether for good or bad. Our Lord said, "Be *wise* as serpents." Serpents, we would say, were types of wickedness; but it is their mindfulness or instinct in avoiding danger and obstacles, which He points out. Matt. x. 16. "Five virgins were *wise*," i.e., were mindful, had forethought of the future. Matt. xxv. 2. The word signifies one showing forethought of the future, whether good or bad. Whereas the words *wise* and *wisdom* have rather changed their meaning in our present

of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, [a]Make

a Dan. 4. 27; Matt. 6. 19; & 19. 21; Ch. 11. 41; 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. ‖ Or, *riches.*

usage, and left this negative sense to other words. ¶ *The children of this world.* Those who are studious of the possessions and pleasures of this world; who seek wealth and means of support. They are such as are opposed to the *children of light.* For there are only two classes of men in the world; they who seek their all here—as Dives, they who look beyond this world for it—as Lazarus. ¶ *Are wiser.* Are more diligent and thoughtful, more provident of their future support, and bring all their faculties to bear on it more entirely than Christians do for their eternal welfare. A sad truth, but established beyond question, by daily experience. ¶ *In their generation.* During their lives. ¶ *Children of light.* Those who are born again by the light of the true faith. Light is an emblem of the celestial regions, and so of knowledge of them, and of God who dwells in them. Christians are looking to those regions as their future home, and struggle in some manner to reach them. But the flesh so confines the mind, and doubts and sins so mar their consistency, that they are to be justly shamed into greater exertions by the prudence and diligence which worldly men show in their occupations. Yea, the same man will show himself energetic and prudent in his worldly business, but listless and dilatory in the affairs of his soul. Says Origen: "The children of this world are not called *wiser*, but more *prudent* than the children of light, and that not absolutely, but in their generation."

9. *Make to yourselves friends.* The *form* of this precept is evidently taken from the foregoing parable, and applied as its moral. And first as to what it does *not* say; for there have been some men, ever since the apostate Julian, to find fault with it. It does not say, Be unrighteous with riches, as the steward was, and does not approve of the man

to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

as unjust and dishonest. It does use him, an evil example in some respects, even as again Jesus says, "Be wise as serpents," that the good which He intends may be the more striking by contrast. Even as St. Paul says, by this same rule of speech, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him *become a fool*, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. iii. 18. In all such cases the contrast sets us on a closer inquiry. Jesus then commands His disciples to make friends, or gain friends by a lawful use of riches, that after death those friends may receive them into heaven. Hence the question arises, Is there such a use of riches possible? Let Scripture answer. Matt. xxv. 34–40. See the texts, which are read while collecting alms in the churches, found in the office for the Holy Communion. The Christian's possessions are entrusted to him for a special purpose; and he may spend them on himself, and waste them, or by forecast he may use them for the good of others, and for the glory of God. He is not to spend his wealth in luxury and pomp, but as a steward; in making himself useful, and seeking to promote the cause of religion. If he does this, *friends*, and the poor whom he has aided, the converted heathen to whom he has sent the missionary, will be commissioned by the Supreme to welcome him to the eternal habitations of heaven. ¶ *Of the.* Not make the mammon your friend, but make friends *by means of it*, i. e., of riches. ¶ *Mammon.* The god of riches. Says St. Augustine: "That which the Hebrews call *mammon*, in Latin is 'riches.'" ¶ *Of unrighteousness.* A Hebrew form of expression for *unrighteous mammon*, and here opposed to "the true riches." Money, and those things it represents, are so constantly used in selfish, sensual and wicked ways, that it is well described as unrighteous. It has and

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous ‖mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?*

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

‖ Or, *riches.*

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does cause multitudes to go astray by its fascinating indulgences. And it is often condemned in Scripture, in its evil uses. 1 Tim. vi. 17; Matt. xix. 21. Here it does not signify riches unjustly gotten, but wealth in all its shapes, which is transitory, and perishes in the using. Use it, use all your powers in doing good, not upon self. Look to a future home; make friends against the time when death shall summon you to close up your days, and give an account of your stewardship. ¶ *When ye fail.* A softened expression for death. The office of each disciple is temporal. He will fail from it, and fill it no more. Then comes the trial of his account current. ¶ *They may receive you. Those friends* may receive the just steward. Who they are is left unsaid, for Jesus would have us to compare spiritual things together, that we may be wise. It is a pious thought which fills out the blank with *the poor*, who were truly blessed by the faithful steward, the tenants of Christ's freehold, the Church, who shall then welcome him, and rise up and call him blessed. It is a consoling thought which makes the *they* to mean the angels, who will receive the souls of the faithful into heaven. A veil hangs over the future—the present duty is perfectly plain. ¶ *Everlasting habitations.* Heaven, opposed here to the mere transient dwellings of the friends of the knavish steward. Can we not be urged to be as wise for those glorious abodes, as he was for a temporal home?

10. *He that is faithful.* No Christian can affect to despise his relations with this world, as of little importance. He must manifest fidelity in all respects; for the character which he shows in the one thing is, in all probability, the same which he has in all. If he is dishonest, or selfish in his dealings with men, God will judge him accordingly. The conscience which rules him in small matters, will be the more energetic in greater.

11. *True riches.* Alms, works of piety, and all those perfections of the spiritual character, which are produced by the faithful use of the graces of the Gospel, and must endure and be as everlasting as the spirit itself. They are the deeds which are done in faith and mercy, called "treasure in heaven" (Matt. vi. 20), otherwise called "fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22), and again, by St. Peter, "a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. v. 4), and by St. Paul, "a good foundation." 1 Tim. vi. 17–19.

12. *Another man's.* It may be proper to put in this word *man's*, though it is not found in the Greek. Our fidelity in that which God will make our own, may be judged of by our care of the things of others. Thus the spiritual character of a servant, a son, or wife, demands of them perfect truth in these relations of life. But omitting the word *man's*, and leaving it general, it may be referred to God. If we are not careful now in those earthly blessings of wealth, influence, and station, which God intrusts to us, then we are not to expect, after an abuse of them, any increase of power or influence, or of the blessing of God upon us. There is truly nothing which is our own; but God would have us regard our life here as a stewardship, that by faithfulness we may receive of Him, as our inheritance by gift, the reward of everlasting life.

13. See note, Matt. vi. 24.

15. *Justify yourselves.* They mocked at Jesus, by wilfully misunderstanding His teachings, or pretending to show some inconsistency in them. And this because they were conscious that they

13 ¶ No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but [a]God knoweth your hearts: for that which is [b]highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

a Ps. 7. 9; 1 Kings 8. 39. *b* 1 Sam. 16. 7. *c* Ps. 102. 26, 27; Is. 40. 8; & 51. 6; Matt. 5.

16 The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 [c]And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 [d]Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband, committeth adultery.

19 ¶ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple

6; 1 Pet. 1. 25. *d* Matt. 5. 32; & 19. 9; Mark 10. 11; 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

were covetous, and servants of mammon. They labored to appear just men before the world, and did not desire to be so truly and thoroughly before God. ¶ *That which is highly esteemed among men.* And deserves no other esteem. When a contrast is made between two things, for a given purpose, it should be often interpreted of those things, only as they are contrasted. Here the mere superficial righteousness of the Pharisees is condemned. It was only on the surface. Therefore it was put in the list of things which men of this world admire, but which God sees through and despises. ¶ *Is abomination.* Is like a sacrifice which he will not accept. It is offensive and unclean in the sight of Him who searches all hearts, and beholds the pretence of piety without the reality. Prov. xii. 22; xxviii. 9.

16. See note, Matt. xi. 12–14. *Every man.* This does not mean that all men were seeking to be true members of the kingdom, which had been announced by John, as the Jews well knew, but that it was now made free to all men, and was no longer a covenant confined to the children of Israel, as the law had been.

17. See notes, Matt. v. 18.

18. See note, Matt. v. 32. *Whosoever putteth away.* An exception made in a law, runs through every succeeding declaration of it. We are to understand the exception which St. Matthew has recorded, that a man may put away his wife for one cause, namely, unfaithfulness to the marriage vow. That crime dissolves the contract, and leaves the injured party free from any obligation in law. The Gospel may still give him considerations of mercy, which should influence his conscience, but the contract is null.

19. *There was a certain rich man.* This seems to be a true narrative rather than a parable. The name of the poor man is given. A Jewish tradition is mentioned by St. Cyril, of a certain Lazarus at that time in Jerusalem, who was afflicted with extreme poverty and sickness, whom our Lord remembers, and introduces for the sake of adding greater point to His words. Or if, with some, we suppose it a parable, a name taken from some living person who had been known to be in great destitution, it reads a lesson of humility to the Pharisees, who perhaps had often passed him by without relief. Jesus sums up the teachings and rebukes of avarice and worldliness just recorded, and explains how to make a right use of wealth, and to act as faithful stewards, and how to serve God with acceptableness by showing mercy, and in the case of the poor man, by endurance of the ills of life

and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

with faith and patience. God sees not as men see; the rich man, splendid, luxurious, selfish, was an abomination to Him. The rich man's name is not mentioned. The blank is left for any of the wealthy mockers around to fill with his own name, and be warned. ¶ *Clothed in purple.* A color obtained from shell-fish. It was much used by the rich, and by courtiers and kings. It is sometimes translated scarlet, but is the same dye. See Judges viii. 26; Dan. v. 7; and Matt. xxvii. 28. ¶ *Fine linen.* The *byssus*, a soft cloth made of flax, very fine and white when compared with other ancient cloths. It was costly, and used only by the wealthy and powerful. Gen. xli. 42; Ex. xxviii. 5. ¶ *Fared sumptuously.* Lived in luxury, with every sensual gratification. Thus lived the rich Jews, thus many professed Christians. "And here we must narrowly watch ourselves, seeing that banquets can scarcely be celebrated blamelessly, for almost always luxury accompanies feasting; and when the body is swallowed up in the delight of refreshing itself, the heart relaxes to empty joys."—*St. Gregory.* The man is not blamed for having or using these things, but for making them subservient to his selfishness and sensuality. The heart which fed so daintily could not see and pity the poor man at his gate.

20. *Beggar.* A poor man. This the name Lazarus also signifies. He was a pauper by inheritance—had always been so. ¶ *Laid at his gate.* He was before the rich man at his going out and coming in—very needy and suffering. Very little from his table would suffice to help him. ¶ *Full of sores.* A poor, unsightly wretch, the opposite to the tender, delicate rich man. It is not said that the rich man refused him broken meat, but he did not aid him effectually. Perhaps he chose to keep him there as a means of ostentatious charity, and prided himself on the appearance of piety which such a shadow of virtue afforded.

21. *The dogs came.* He was hardly elevated above them. The dogs throng the mansion of the wealthy Oriental to dispute for the remnants of food which are thrown away. Lazarus was there among them on their own errand, to receive a precarious support for his miserable body. The dogs that crowded around him were so familiar that they caressed him. Did ever a Christian lie lower than this? Wonderful is the mercy of God. Job "sat down among the ashes" with a broken potsherd for his only comforter, and breathed out words of sublimest wisdom to fascinate and console every mourner since. Lazarus breathed out a soul among his canine companions that angels tenderly bore to the regions of the blessed. And He who taught his story, suffered for man's salvation far keener agonies and burdens of ignominy than either. Can Christians read such facts and not be warned that the proper exercise of their charity lies in relieving the objects of pity around them? Does not some Lazarus lie in reach of every Christian, if he will only search for him and aid him? Charities in the distance are well, at home are better. Dives might have signed his name, and given goodly gifts to the building a temple gate. The good Samaritan took the poor man in his arms and bore him to a place of safety.

22. *Was carried by angels.* Nothing is said of burial for him, but angels, according to the Scripture teaching and the prevalent belief of that day, bore him to the intermediate state, there to await the day of the resurrection. Angels receive the care of the spirits of the just. Matt. xviii. 10; Heb. i. 13. ¶ *Abraham's bosom.* The Jews expressed the present condition of departed saints in three ways, as in the Garden

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried:

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried, and said,

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of Eden, under the throne of glory, and in Abraham's bosom. By each they conveyed the idea of rest, of happiness, favor with God, and expectation of the future glory. Abraham was the head of their race. To him the promises were made. He was the one into whose happy lot they desired to be received. To rest in his bosom, was a figure of speech taken from their custom of reclining at feasts. See note, Matt. xxiii. 6. Abraham himself was in Paradise, a state of expectation, in which the spirit awaited the union of the body. There he enjoyed the favor of God, in such wise as it may be received by a bodiless soul. Of this condition we can form little notion, and must express it in general terms by metaphors taken from this life. ¶ *Was buried.* By the usual grand ceremonies. The word implies a continuance of his splendor to the last. Men honored his remains,—angels alone sought those of the beggar. One slept in state, the other was perhaps flung out to the birds and beasts. Change the scene, and see how God judges them.

23. *In hell.* In Hades, not Gehenna, a vast abysmal region, which was divided into two portions, according to the notions of the Hebrews and Pagans of that age. David speaks of his own soul as in hell (Ps. xvi. 10), which language St. Peter also uses as entirely true of the soul of Jesus during His time of death. Acts iii. 27, 31. And that this is not the last place of punishment appears from Rev. xx. 14. "Death and hell (Hades) were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death." Compared with 2 Pet. ii. 4; "the angels that sinned were cast down to Tartarus (a portion of Hades), and delivered into chains of darkness, *to be reserved unto judgment.*" See Jude 6. The "judgment of the great day" is a command to "depart into everlasting fire, *prepared* for the devil and his angels." Matt. xxv. 41. This final condition is one in which *bodies* as well as spirits are received and punished. Fire is said to be the instrument of final punishment, and we may be certain that the penal *inflictions* of that future woe, over and above the pangs of remorse and despair, will not fall short of "*everlasting burnings.*" Before the resurrection of the *body*, of course all pangs must be *inward, self-caused horrors*, which here are figured by the word flame. The rich man had *no body* at this time,—has not still. Of course the story must be explained in accordance with this fact. So also the account of Lazarus. Both are in the intermediate state, called in the Creed *Hell*, and explained in the rubric "the place of departed spirits." See note, Matt. xi 23. ¶ *He lifted up his eyes.* He looked up to where Abraham and Lazarus were above him. We instinctively place the happy above the miserable in our ways of speaking of them. ¶ *Being in torments.* A great and complicated agony of horror, remorse, despair, fear, and shame; such torments as a spirit suffers when awake to eternal truths, and beholding the future with a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. x. 27. These agonies of mind, "chains of darkness," as St. Peter calls them, can be expressed only by the language taken from human life, since we can in no other manner obtain a just sense of their severity. ¶ *And seeth Abraham, &c.* Our Lord conforms His expressions to the notions of His age. The Jews and Romans believed the two states, like *places*, within sight of each other, and spake of spirits exactly as if they possessed bodies. The agonies of this man were tenfold increased at the sight of these two in such close union. Abraham was the patriarch by whose faith

Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and [a]cool my tongue: for I am [b]tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime

a Zech. 14. 12. *b* Is. 66. 24.

[c]receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which

c Job 21. 13; Ps. 73. 12–20.

he, a Jew, had boasted that he was to be saved,—even as the Pharisees hoped of themselves. He had not imitated the patriarch's faith, and now he finds that he has lost his soul. Lazarus had been too mean on earth for his notice,—had fed on the fragments of his feast, and found in his mean condition, that dog-surrounded gate to be to him the gate of heaven, which to its luxurious master, was the gate to hell. How terrific seem the contrasts of daily life, if we look beyond the grave, and picture their results.

24. *Father Abraham.* This prayer of his was an indirect lesson to warn the Pharisees how futile was their expectation of safety from their kindred with the patriarch. Beyond the grave God only can save us. We may judge how useless are prayers to saints, and how false are notions of purgatory, when the only one prayer of the kind, which is recorded in Scripture, met with such ill success. He did not pray to God, for he knew Moses and the prophets, and that he had broken the laws of God. He did not call to Lazarus, for he could hope little from him. But he had carried the notion with him that he was a child of Abraham, and he tests it in this small request, and fails. ¶ *Dip the tip, &c.* How trifling the request. And since it meets no favor, it teaches us that no prayers can there avail. The soul when it passes the period of its probation, must remain shut up to the eternal award of the life it has led on earth. If an impassable barrier prevents this trifle, all greater relief is for ever impossible. ¶ *Cool my tongue.* The same tongue which had fed so daintily; which had been employed among his flatterers; which had been the idol of his sensual worship;—wines and feasts had inflamed it, and no finger can cool it for him but the finger of the beggar, whom he had allowed to lie at his gates. ¶ *In this flame.* Of course he, as a spirit, had no tongue, and could not feel any thing which we properly call flame. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones." Luke xxiv. 39. Hence Dr. Whitby would place the whole scene beyond the judgment day. But that cannot be done, for he desires to send Lazarus to his "five brethren," then living. The time was even at the then speaking; the flame, that inward fever of remorse; the tongue represents that inordinate passion, of which it had once been the organ and instrument.

25. *Son.* The saints are gentle. Still will Abraham call him son, although a lost spirit. The bonds of Church privileges must pass beyond the grave to end only at the judgment, when all ties will be burst, save those which bind together kindred souls. St. Paul will have us pity the reprobate by a like mercy. 2 Thess. iii. 6–15. ¶ *Remember.* And by remembering see the justice of the decree. He suffered there for the deeds done in the body. He had chosen his part in the world, and unfitted himself for the good part then. Memory will be the handmaid of conscience to scourge the wicked, in the time which elapses between death and the judgment. ¶ *Thy good things.* Mammon, riches, ease, and luxury. See verse 13. The human soul can have but one supreme good. It must serve God or mammon. It cannot have both the good things of earth and spiritual graces for its chief food. ¶ *Comforted.* His poverty, disease, ignominious dependence are ended, and

would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

a John 5. 39, 45; Acts 15. 21; & 17. 11.

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he is comforted. His reward is then more than equivalent to his sufferings on earth. Rom. viii. 18.

26. *A great gulf.* By this great gulf or abyss, which no mortal could pass, we understand an irreversible sentence of the Almighty, which assigns the everlasting condition of departed souls. It is *fixed*—cannot be moved by any mortal cries or efforts. It anticipates the decrees of the judgment. It is in the spiritual state and substance of the souls themselves. The period of change from bad to good, of regeneration by a Saviour's power, is past at death, and the soul is as unchangeably fixed for ever to the results of its own choice in life, as any man would be if on one side of such an abyss as these words suggest. The doctrine of purgatory is surely lost in this great gulf, for what language can be framed to deny it more plainly and emphatic than this! This Jew had been no great sinner, but just such a man as the doctrine of purgatory was first made for; a courteous, decent, fashionable, worldly professor in the Jewish Covenant. Why could he not have asked for the prayers of the priests, or the sacrifices of the temple, or the supererogation of saints, to bridge the gulf? Such folly cannot live in the light of Scripture.

27, 28. *Five brethren.* Human affections live beyond death, for they belong to the soul. How agonizing, then, the sight of the evil results of wicked deeds to the lost spirit. He cannot but desire to save his brethren. What must be the awful remorse, ever accumulating, of the infidel and heretic writers, who have poisoned the life of myriads, and ruined their souls, by their pernicious influences.

29. *Moses and the prophets.* That is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, containing the terms of salvation as God has fixed them. The Jews often spoke of their Testament by the names of particular authors, meaning to embrace it all. The inspired writings of Moses and the prophets contained for the Jews all things necessary to salvation; and as the VIIth Article declares, "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting life is offered to mankind, by Christ," &c.

30. *Nay.* No. Even as his own fall proved, they would not listen to them. So is it now. The Bible, the preaching of the Gospel, the regular ordinances of religion, are too much despised. Men are ever inventing new measures, to make up a device similar to this notion of a returned spirit. But God's ways are best. Hold by them and be safe.

31. *Be persuaded.* For it was not want of knowledge, but of will. The same is true of every sinner who is now listening to the Gospel. Let him bend his pride and put off his worldliness, and his eyes will see the light of conviction at once. ¶ *Though one rose from the dead.* This opinion was shown to be true, by the return of Jesus to life. The Jews could not find it easier to believe than they had done before. They saw Lazarus of Bethany raised, and they only grew the more furious against the Saviour. And they deceive themselves sadly, who are waiting for a more convenient season, in which they will have

CHAPTER XVII.

THEN said he unto the disciples, [a]It is impossible but that offences will come: but wo *unto him* through whom they come!

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves: [b]If thy brother trespass against thee, [c]rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had

a Matt. 18. 6, 7; Mark 9. 42; 1 Cor. 11. 19. *b* Matt. 18. 15, 21. *c* Lev. 19. 17; Prov. 17. 10; Jas. 5. 19.

greater light than the Bible now offers them. Certain important truths are contained in this narrative, which are worthy of serious consideration: 1st. The life of selfish ease is one which will result in final ruin. It is not said that this man was a sinner before men. He may have been strict as a Jew or Pharisee. He loved nothing beyond his ease. Are there not such Christians now? 2d. The lowest condition of life may be consistent with spiritual grace. Lazarus was no sage or wonderful man. He was one that we should probably have passed, as too low in the scale of mankind to be noticed. Yet from a life alleviated by dogs, he learned patience and piety, and passed to the friendship of Abraham. 3d. Souls receive a spontaneous punishment at death. It is not hell, but remorse, fear, and expectation of the awful day of judgment. On the other hand, the righteous at once rest in hope, and are in joy and felicity, awaiting the future summons, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Christians look not to Abraham's bosom, as the Jews did, but to "depart and be with Christ, which is far better." 4th. The character formed in life remains in its results on the soul. The rich man was punished in those passions which he had most indulged. Lazarus was comforted after a wretched life. Too often do we forget that we are forming characters for eternity. 5th. The condition of spirits at death is unalterably fixed. No prayers or sighs can then avail. Masses for the dead are a vain superstition, which could give the rich man no help—can give us none. The gulf is too wide for Romish theories to bridge it. As the tree falls, so it must lie. There will never be a change in the destinies we are bringing on us now. 6th. The Scriptures reveal sufficiently the way of salvation now. Nothing can be added to them. And if men will not be good Christians by the persuasions of reason and conscience, it is a fond device to seek to make them so by terror.

CHAPTER XVII.

1, 2. See Matt. xviii. 6, 7. Such is the state of the world and the wickedness of men, that crimes and scandals must occur, which will destroy the souls of simple and credulous persons.

3, 4. See Matt. xviii. 21, 22. *Rebuke.* Tell him his fault, in order that he may know that he has done wrong and repent. Often great evils may be avoided, by a little firmness and candid speaking in the beginning of difficulties between Christians. Unless one exercise candor, he has less right to complain of offence.

5. *Increase our faith.* The three duties charged upon them, of sinlessness before men, of charitable rebuke of their faults, and ready pardon on condition of repentance, seem so difficult, that the disciples feel it not in the power of the natural heart to comply, and pray to Jesus for a portion of the grace which He showed in His own life: and faith would give them this spiritual

faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

7 But which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

help, since to trust in God for the final setting all things right, gives patience now; and love of God as the Father of all, alone teaches us to love others with a wise and long-suffering charity. They prayed to Jesus; hence believing that He had power to grant them this faith, to work in their hearts by grace. The prayer confesses His divinity as truly as if they had prefaced it with such a declaration. Every Christian when he beholds the trials of his way, the graces which still seem too high for him, should make this same prayer, and may expect a favorable answer. James i. 5.

6. *Sycamine tree.* This name is given to a species of tree which had leaves like a mulberry, and fruit like the fig-tree. It was imported in Palestine from Egypt. It was sometimes called Pharaoh's fig-tree. It had once been transplanted from Egypt, *by a sort of faith in natural laws.* It could be again moved, if necessary, for religious obedience, against all natural operations by the power of a spiritual faith. Faith as a grain of mustard seed, signifies the smallest faith of a true kind—which faith is in the power of God doing all that He commands. If He command this miracle, the Christian has the faith to obey. Higher works of faith than miracles are seen in subduing the evil will, and in turning the souls of sinners from their sins. 1 Cor. xiii.; See Matt. xvii. 20.

7. *Having a servant.* They asked for an increase of faith. They are now directed to perseverance in obedience, by and in which faith is perfected. For their prayer seemed to say—It is hard to do those things which are commanded. Jesus, therefore, shows them their own natural conduct with their servants, and thus teaches them: 1. That they are servants to Him for this very spiritual work. They were thinking of reward, of a temporal kingdom. He will have them *serve* and become spiritual first, before they have a reward. The disciples had to learn humility before their faith was increased. 2. That they are to persevere in their service—not to expect that after one or two attempts, their respite is to occur. Jesus would have them continue steadfast, that their faith might be tried; and would delay them for a long time yet from the rest which they so eagerly coveted. 3. That their final reward was not so much a matter of merit, as of favor. They must put aside pride, and serve God from a purer love than they had then; and change the carnal heart in them, before their faith could be brighter. ¶ *By and by.* Rather, as soon as he comes in—at once. No master would do this, nor desire to show the servant that he was overcome with gratitude to him for working for him. He would keep the proper distinction between them, and bid him do the menial duties of the house, as a servant should, and wait till the proper time for his food. The disciples were to learn by this that they were not to look upon their service to Christ as a *merit*, but a *duty.*

8, 9. *Gird thyself.* See note, Luke xii. 37. ¶ *I trow not.* An old English word, from which comes the word *true*—meaning here, I think not.

10. *We are unprofitable servants.* A servant has no claim, in justice, to a reward. And when men have done all

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, [a]We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten [b]men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, [c]Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it

a Job 22. 3; & 35. 7 Ps. 16. 2; Rom. 11. 35; 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17.

b Lev. 13. 46. *c* Lev. 13. 2; & 14. 2.

in their power for the Lord Jesus, they have no claim to the rewards of the Gospel, except by His free grace and love. That grace works in them the humblest spirit, and manifests its presence in the lowly opinion of self, and the unbounded gratitude to Him who died to save from sin. Grace saves us. But we cannot do more for God than *duty*; nay, such are our infirmities that we cannot come up to what it is our duty to do. We must, therefore, confess, not only unprofitableness, but the errors and defects of our obedience, that only infinite love can pardon. So far is the Romish notion of supererogation false. Our works cannot save us, much less can they serve as an atonement for the defects of other men. There is no *merit* allowed to them, even for our own souls—absolutely none. Of course, then, none for other men. We must labor and do all that we can for the good of others—for that is our duty. We must humbly confess *all merit*, as residing in Christ Jesus, who alone redeems and saves us "unprofitable servants."

11. *As He went.* During the journey to Jerusalem, to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, in October, Jesus passed along through the two countries named. He was desirous of journeying without observation, and took an unfrequented road. It is supposed that He passed along the confines of the two countries mentioned, as far as the river Jordan, and went down its valley to the neighborhood of Jericho. In this comparatively lonely road, he finds these miserable objects, the ten lepers.

12. *There met Him.* Before He reached the village, He came upon them. Lepers being unclean by the law, were not allowed to enter towns and villages, and were often found near the gates of these, begging alms of the travellers who passed. Lev. xiii. 46; Numb. v. 2, 3. See note, Matt. viii. 1. The number together was unusual. They had been cast out by all men, and had joined company from sheer fellowship of misery—nine Jews and a Samaritan. Common wretchedness had extinguished their national hatred. ¶ *Stood afar off.* As they were required to do by law, in order that they might not defile any person by contact with them. They fear to draw too near. And how sad the picture of their misery, given in these three words! Lonely, abject, unclean and dying, they meet of a sudden this great Prophet, of whom even they, outcasts as they were, had heard.

13. *Jesus, Master.* The leper described by St. Matthew, came near and worshipped, and said, "*Lord*, if Thou wilt, &c.," and Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, "I will, be thou clean." Matt. viii. 2, 3. Bartimeus called to Him, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus instantly cured him. Mark x. 47. These ten lepers adopt the word Master—teacher—which shows a lesser faith, and Jesus does not call them to Him to touch them, but sends them away, to try their faith. The word *master* was applied to Jesus, by both friends and unbelievers.

14. *Go shew yourselves.* See note,

came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when

Matt. viii. 4. Jerusalem was some fifty miles off. The journey was commanded to test their faith in Him as a true master and prophet. They of course understood Him to promise them a cure by this order—for they were to go to the priests to show that they were cured. Lev. xiii. 2. But if their love had been truer, and the humility greater, they would have met the same cure at the feet of Jesus. According to our faith is it done to us. There is a golden rule in the gifts of grace which we have in these blessed words—all things are possible to him that believeth. The miracle shows the rule here applied to men of different minds, one, humble and loving—the others as anxious as he to be cured, but, by no means humble or grateful. ¶ *As they went.* Before they got far from the place—still far enough to show their real feelings to Jesus, by returning or not.

15, 16. *One of them.* If this miracle has any connection with the truths which are taught in the first portion of the chapter, then this man is contrasted with the nine Jews who were ungrateful to Jesus, because of a secret pride of their covenant privileges. Just now the ten lepers were all on a level, wretched, with faith enough to be cured—for they obeyed the order of Him, whom they esteemed a prophet. Now, one, overwhelmed by gratitude for the mercy which had visited him a Samaritan, and an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, humbly glorifies God for his unexpected cure. The others, imagining that some covenant excellence lay in them to make them worthy of the favor, hasten away to the priests, without one word of thanks or praise to Jesus. ¶ *He was a Samaritan.* See Matt. x. 5. He had no merit to fall back on, and could confess freely that it was free grace to him "an unprofitable servant." When privilege is mistaken for piety, and ordinances or Church laws and customs are esteemed pure religion, instead of helps to it, the conscience is led astray, and the heart is deceived and hardened. Then is it often seen that the poor sinners who have no chance to trust in themselves are saved, while the Pharisee is cut off.

17, 18, 19. *Where are the nine?* Going to the priest. But surely nature would prompt them to return, and thank their Deliverer before going so far away. The sin was not in their going—but in their going without gratitude. How often may this query be raised in our congregations now—Where are the nine? Where are the children of pious parents—baptized, nurtured in the fear of the Lord—in Catechisms, Sunday schools, Bible classes, with many prayers for them? Where are they? Sitting listlessly on the wayside—sleeping over their duties, cold and dead of heart to spiritual things, turning their back on Jesus who invites them, and perhaps hastening along the primrose path of worldly fashion and pleasure to the tomb. ¶ *This stranger.* This foreigner, or one born of another race. It was a greater faith that first led him to appeal to a prophet of the Jews, who were his enemies—which led him next to turn his face to go to Jerusalem among foes, and which now humbled him at the feet of his benefactor. But earnest

the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not ‖with observation.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold,

‖ Or, *with outward show.* ‖ Or, *among you.* *a* Matt. 24. 23.

for cure, he will do and dare all for it. Receiving it, he sees at once that it comes from the grace of God. ¶ *Go thy way.* Go to your home or whither you will. He needs no showing to the Jewish priest, who bears before God a heart pure from selfishness and pride. As a Samaritan, he could have no dealing with the priests of Jerusalem, and we cannot imagine him as going thither. ¶ *Thy faith.* Thy belief that I could do this, and thy trust that I would.

20. *Was demanded.* Was asked publicly. They implied that they were tired of hearing of a kingdom which did not seem to approach, and they intended to hold Him up to ridicule. They thought that it would come with war and victory, with a splendid conqueror triumphing over their enemies. Jesus had now been teaching for two years and more, about this kingdom, but made no greater show in external matters than at the first. They scorned the real kingdom, which was to rule within the heart, and now wished to throw contempt upon Jesus. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* That glorious vision of an all-conquering kingdom spoken of in the *letter* of the prophets. Let the reader consider those prophecies, such as Is. lx. with the imagination for the once, that they foretold a temporal monarchy. He will see the reason of that questioning, and of this passage. ¶ *With observation.* With watching the growth and progress of a victorious army. Every one who claimed falsely to be the Messiah, came with observation. They gathered a crowd, promised glorious temporal rewards, declared the Jewish state to be just on the eve of its greatest glory, led out their followers into camps, and perished, as

the kingdom of God is within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*.

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they deserved. Not so came the true Messias. He began His reign in the secrets of the heart, and was the ruler of multitudes before the rulers of the world were aware of the nature of His mission.

21. *Lo here! or, Lo there!* As men would say, in expectation of some great event, if they saw a camp in one place, or heard of an army holding a walled city in another. They would look for news to those quarters, and expect temporal deliverance. This explains the word *observation* above. It is such a watching as men would make, who notice the march and conquests of an army. How trifling was this object, the glorification of one small tribe, compared with the salvation of a whole world! ¶ *Is within you.* It is moral and spiritual, ruling over the thoughts and affections of the soul, bringing every thing within man into subjection to God—changing his nature, making him pure, pious and holy, happy here in the way of life, and blessed in the future, with the crown of righteousness that shall be given to all who conquer their spiritual enemies in the power of their King, Christ Jesus. "See," said the disciples to their master, "what a glorious temple is here; how will it be the glory of thy kingdom when the Gentiles will flow into it!" Yet that temple was to be utterly destroyed before their eyes could be opened to the true spiritual nature of the kingdom *within them*, which Jesus came to erect. The epistle to the Ephesians contains a noble description of the true kingdom of Christ.

22. *The days will come.* The days of reprobation and punishment, when the Jewish commonwealth was destroyed by the armies of Rome. The history of Josephus is chiefly valuable

23 [a]And they shall say to you, See here! or, See there! go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 [b]And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in [c]the days of Lot: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same [d]day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all:

30 Even thus [e]shall it be in

a Matt. 24. 23. *b* Gen. 7. *c* Gen. 19. *d* Gen. 19. 16. 24. *e* 2 Thes. 1. 7.

as describing those times, the most terrible in many respects, that have ever been described. God, after long and repeated trials of mercy in reforming the nation, gave it up to a curse so terrible, that Jesus has made the fall of Jerusalem the type of the end of the world. See Matt. xxiv. ¶ *One of the days of the Son of man.* One of the days even then passing, when mercy was offered by Jesus their Messiah, would appear to them as desirable above all things. During the life of Jesus, the fate of the nation hung in the balance. Had the Jews believed in, and obeyed Him, they would have been to this day a glorious nation. But after they had called down voluntarily the curse, saying, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children," they had sealed their fate. Then, when punishment came, they would too late look back to the privileges which they had rejected, and desire once more the days of the Son of man. See Matt. xxiii. 37–39.

23. *See here, &c.* Many false Messiahs arose in the last days of the Jewish history, and increased the confusion and horrors of the time. The disciples were cautioned to beware of all such. See Matt. xxiv. 23–27.

25. See notes, Mark viii. 31.

26, 27. See notes, Matt. xxiv. 37–39.

28–30. *They did eat, &c.* They were living as usual, engaged in the common affairs of life, just as men who were in no danger. The Sodomites were notorious sinners, and sunk in sensuality and crime. See Gen. xix. 23–25. ¶ *It rained.* "The Lord rained" "fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven." Gen. xix. 26. It was a Divine visitation, no ordinary flood, but one bearing the marks of God's wrath. ¶ *Fire and brimstone.* There were four cities on the low and fertile plain, where Lot, led by the desire of the eye, and not by a true faith, chose his residence, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim. The sullen waters of the Dead Sea now roll above their ruins. The traveller, standing on the peak of Olivet, near Jerusalem, can see its motionless surface in the distance, about thirty miles to the south-east. The whole history was an awful epitome of the future destruction of the world. And as such it is here alluded to by our Saviour.

30. *Even thus.* After the same manner, the last day will find the wicked world, unprepared, and unbelieving; the sinners still placing all their hope here, and refusing to repent, the righteous fleeing to the refuge of the Rock of Ages. 2 Pet. iii. 10–12.

31. See notes, Matt. xxiv. 17, 18.

32. *Remember Lot's wife.* See Gen. xix. 26. She was disobedient to the Divine command, and while she fled,

the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 [a]Remember Lot's wife.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it.

34 [b]I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, [c]Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AND he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought [d]always *to* pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was ‖in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.

a Gen. 19. 26. *b* Matt. 24. 40, 41; 1 Thes. 4. 17. ‖ This 36th verse is wanting in most of the Greek copies.

c Job 39. 30; Deut. 28. 49. *d* Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18; Col. 4. 2; 1 Thes. 5. 17. ‖ Greek, *in a certain city.*

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had left her *heart* behind her. She must take a farewell look at her treasures, and was changed into salt—a standing monument of Divine justice. "Lot's wife represents those who in time of trouble look back, and turn aside from the hope of Divine promise, and hence she was made a pillar of salt as a warning to men not to do likewise, and to season, as it were, their hearts, lest they become corrupt."—*St. Augustine.*

33. See Matt. x. 39.

34–36. See Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

37. *Where, Lord?* The disciples could not appreciate the spiritual truths of their Master's teaching. They cry out in painful surprise, "Where, Lord, where will this be? whence will it come?" Jesus replies in a manner obscure and symbolical at the time, but sufficiently clear to guide them when the Spirit should afterward illumine their hearts. As vultures gather from every side where a dead carcass is thrown, so the punishments of God will infallibly come down upon a nation which lies battening in sin and crime. For the cause and origin of punishment springs not from the ground or by chance—it comes from sin, individual and national, and should be sought and remedied there, with a penitent and humble spirit.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *A parable unto them to this end.* A tale which would convey this truth. See Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ *Always to pray.* To persevere in the practice of prayer. This is opposed to an inconstant or impulsive spirit, which makes one or two hurried petitions and ceases. The Christian, as this woman, need not neglect other duties, but must so constantly aim at the great object of his prayers, the favor of his Judge, that he may be said never to be other than a man of prayer. ¶ *Not to faint.* Not to give up, if the answer to prayer should be withheld for a time; to persevere until we obtain the grace which we need—and not be discouraged if it does not come in our own time and way.

2. *A judge.* His office was to punish wrongdoers, to administer laws, and to do justice to all, especially to the widow and orphan. Matt. v. 25. They "judged not for man," that is not to favor any person unjustly, "but for the Lord who is with such in judgment." 2 Chron. xix. 6. Poor, weak, and des-

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man,

5 Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his [a]own elect, which cry day and

[a] Rev. 6. 10.

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olate persons had often no other resource for justice than the conscience of the judge. God had given the Jewish magistrates frequent commands to be just to all such. Is. i. 17; Jer. xxi. 12. It is an evil case, when the judge of any people is impious and desperate—does not fear to offend God, nor care what reputation he has with men.

3. *Avenge me of mine adversary.* Do me justice against the one who has done me wrong. She did pray for revenge, so much as to be righted against a flagrant oppressor. She was weak—had nothing else to trust to but her intercession with the judge—and, such is his character, that she has little to hope for from it. Where many a Christian faints with the merciful Judge of all, she began to work, and succeeded in her petition, because she would not be discouraged. ¶ *Adversary.* The party opposed to her in the case which had been tried. It had gone against her, but she will not give it up; will still pray for justice, beyond and against all hope. Though in a desperate strait, she will not despair.

4, 5. *For a while.* The judge was unwilling to redress her wrongs, and put her off and refused to hear her petition. ¶ *Within himself.* He came to this conclusion, in order to avoid any farther trouble. ¶ *Though I fear not God, &c.* Though he was so bold in sin as to confess his reckless disregard of all rights and religion, yea, even of public opinion, yet even he could be brought to listen to a persevering petitioner. Of course we dislike the selfish man and detest his hardheartedness. And it is a strong argument which comes to us from his very wickedness. For if even he, selfish as he was, could be persuaded, how much more reason have we to persevere in prayer, with the good and merciful Father of spirits; who not only is disposed to do right, but is merciful and tender towards His people. ¶ *She weary me.* The argument of utter selfishness. Not for her sake at all will he do this, but to get rid of her. So that in doing right, he loses by selfishness the praise of a sense of justice. See Gal. vi. 9.

6. *And the Lord said, Hear, &c.* Listen now, and consider the decision of this wicked judge, and compare it with the Divine promises.

7. *Shall not God avenge.* The argument is *a fortiori.* If so bad a man does this, how much more will "the Judge of all the earth do right." Therefore take courage and pray to Him without ceasing. No candid reader will imagine, for an instant, that our Lord approved of the character of this man, or compared him to God, except in the one point, that he was brought to listen to the petition of the widow. The Christian has need of perseverance in prayer. 1. Because God would *try his heart*, to discover to him of what temper it is, and for wise purposes of his own. Thus the hymn bids us pray still, even when we do not receive an immediate answer, for often

> "Behind a frowning providence
> God hides a smiling face."

2. Often the fault is in the Christian. He is selfish, narrow, double-minded or restless. Only continual prayer will draw him out of self, enlarge his heart, purify his desires, and make him submissive to the

night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he [a]will avenge

a Heb. 10. 7; 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9.

them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Divine will. James i. 3–6. God withholds the good gift which is desired, until we, by earnest devotion, acquire the fit temper for receiving it. ¶ *Avenge.* Do justice to, against all adversaries. The early Christians felt this to be a precious promise, when they were overwhelmed by the oppression of the gainsaying and cruel world. Borne down by evil men, they could look above, and feel that Eternal Justice was pledged to vindicate them from the calumnies and cruelties of the world. And every Christian should continue earnest in prayer against his spiritual adversaries, who seek to ruin him, leaving all thoughts of vengeance to God. ¶ *Elect.* See note, Matt. xxiv. 22. The chosen people; Christians. They are called so because they are *chosen* out of the Gentile world, by that providence of God which has sent to them the Church and Gospel. Such as pray unto God earnestly and without ceasing, are here intended, or, as our Article (XVIIth) has it: "Such godly persons as feel in themselves the working of the spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing their minds up to high and heavenly things, having established and confirmed faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, and a fervently kindled love toward God, and following that will of God which we have expressly declared unto us in the word of God." ¶ *Which cry day and night.* They cry unceasingly. It is their habit of mind and life, in public, in their families, and in secret, making all their wants known unto the Lord. 1 Thess. v. 17; 1 Tim. ii. 8; Jas. v. 13.

8. *Speedily.* Suddenly, in a time unexpected by them. As the previous discourse had been concerning the coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem, so this parable seems to allude to the same. In the fall of that city, as in a type, constant allusion is made to the end of all things. Many years would pass. Christians would be persecuted, and cry for help to God. Many would despair, when, in God's own time, "as a thief in the night," the first event would happen, and the Church for a time be relieved. So is it to be with the final coming of Christ. 2 Pet. iii. 8–10. ¶ *Nevertheless.* Still or but for all this promise made to prayer, shall I find constant faith then? ¶ *The Son of man cometh.* 1. He came to destroy the Jewish nation and save the Christians. 2. He will come to judge the world. In the first case many despaired, and fell back to pagan idolatries. In the latter, the book of Revelation discloses evil times to come, when many shall fail through tribulation. ¶ *Faith.* Firm, true, *prayerful* faith, which is still crying to the Judge for help; such conduct as the widow's, who had hardly one chance of being successful, yet held pertinaciously by that. The brightest faith is seen in the greatest trouble. The word is here used in this emphatic sense. Says St. Augustine: "Our Lord adds this to show that, when faith fails, prayer dies. In order to pray then, we must have faith, and that our faith fail not, we must pray. Faith pours forth prayer, and the pouring forth of the heart in prayer, gives steadfastness to faith. And since faith is not a gift of the proud, but of the humble, our Lord proceeds to add a parable concerning humility and against pride." ¶ *In the earth.* 1. In the land of Judea, in which, until the fall of the city, the events were to be especially noteworthy. Many parts of the Epistles were written to the early Christians, to keep them steadfast in the faith. 2. In the wide earth, when Jesus shall come at the last. We must test our

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that ‖ they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I[a] thank thee, that I am not as

‖ Or, *as being righteous.*

a Rev. 3. 17.

faith by our prayers. Is it firm, constant, devout and hopeful, such as God will regard and bless?

9. *Unto certain.* It applied to some of the bystanders, but was useful to all. The first parable taught the use of constant prayer; this illustrates the proper manner of it, that it be with humility. ¶ *Which trusted in themselves.* Who held the error of the Pharisees, that they were righteous before God, and could merit by their own goodness the answer to prayer. The conduct of this man shows how he trusted in himself. He thought that he was not like sinners around, but that by his fastings and scrupulousness in paying tithes, he merited a hearing of heaven. ¶ *Despised others.* See ch. xv. 2. Looked down on others as being sinners and outcasts. The Pharisees believed in an original fated distinction between men, by which some, even from birth, through the influence of the stars at the time, were holy and successful, others reprobate and low. This man's speech implies this opinion. He considered it a subject of thanksgiving that it was not *his fate* to have been born as common men, but to have enjoyed a peculiar privilege with God. A similar error is now a danger with Christians. No matter how we may term it, he who learns to entertain the feeling that a secret fate or decree has shut him in to eternal salvation, and that beyond his own will to aid or reject it, while other men are absolutely incapable of salvation, whether they be willing or unwilling to receive it, he assumes the mental posture of this Pharisee. His heart may labor to cast off the consequences of this error, and other doctrines of the Scriptures may lead him into a happy inconsistency, so that he will maintain humble, diligent piety; but his piety will be gained in spite of his opinions. Few good Christians will now go the length of this false doctrine, but much misery and delusion have been caused by it heretofore.

10. *The temple.* The Jews attended daily a liturgical service in the temple. These two went up for that purpose, and met in the court of the Israelites, near the Sanctuary. See Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *A Pharisee.* See note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *A Publican.* See Matt. v. 37.

11. *Stood and prayed thus with himself.* The Jews stood in the thanksgiving and public devotions of the temple. See note, Matt. vi. 5. His prayer contains no petition, but is called so by a general sense, as an address to God. It is surmised from the form of the Greek, that *he stood by himself*, in a conspicuous place, near to the court of the priests. ¶ *God, I thank Thee.* Jesus would show us his pride, as debarring him from justification. He thanked the Almighty for making him separate from sinners, for so ruling the destinies that controlled his birth that he was born under favoring auspices, and to a meritorious righteousness. He felt no need of God's pardon and grace. He trusted in himself, that he was sufficiently good to approach the Deity in prayer, and to meet Him as one deserving His favor. He had not yet learned the "pride that apes humility," which is often dangerously substituted for his more honest speech. ¶ *Extortioners.* Those who forced from others their property in wicked ways, as the publicans did. He rejoiced that he was not one to commit flagrant crimes. His life before men had been strictly moral, a mode of life sometimes seen, in one whose heart is cold and proud. The Pharisees would not force the unwilling to give them their goods, for that would have disgraced them before men, but

other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

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they could by wicked arts, "devour widows' houses," nor ever feel the shame before God, which their conduct should have produced.

12. *I fast twice in the week.* He was not only a moral man, but a strict professor of legal righteousness; he observed all the customs of his people. The stricter Jews fasted twice in the week; on Thursdays, in memory of Moses going up into the mount, and on Mondays, of his coming down again. This fact of his frequent fasts seems to be fixed upon by him as a specimen of his general observance of the Mosaic ritual. They were marks of courage in mortifying the flesh, and seemed a worthy test in his eyes of his religious character. He had not learned that he could do all this, and yet have not a heart right toward God. Fasting in itself is not condemned, but only the pride and bigotry which are manifested in these words. ¶ *I give tithes.* Tenths. The tenth of his possessions, which were given for pious purposes, according to the Mosaic law. Numb. xviii. 21. The Pharisees were exceeding scrupulous in this matter, and tithed even the pot herbs of their gardens, mint, anise and cummin. Fasting and paying tithes were in themselves right and good. We should thank God when we are kept, by pious restraints, from the vileness of many sinners, and educated to observe the customs of the Church with strictness. It is a sad mistake to lean on these habits and privileges as other than helps to a right spirit. And that spirit is an humble one, which seeks to do all for God, and yet says, "unprofitable servants" at the end. Let us carefully avoid the mistakes of the deceitful heart. A man may now take the publican's place, and do and say all that he did, with the Pharisee's heart in his bosom. Beware of *pride*, which often betrays the Christian under the most angelic forms and sentiments of humility.

13. *Standing afar off.* Possibly the court of the Gentiles, which was farthest of all from the Holy of Holies, esteemed the symbolic residence of God. This poor man had been probably all that the Pharisee had called him, extortionate, unjust, or worse. He knew that he was a sinner, and this contempt which he received from others had made him wise toward God. He is ashamed before all—he is humble before God. Having no possible hold for pride, he gives up all, and trusts nothing to himself. ¶ *So much as his eyes.* He was bowed down with shame and remorse,—was in such real trouble that he felt unworthy to look toward the place where God's honor dwelt. Persons in a like state naturally kneel and bow down toward the earth. Dan. vi. 10; viii. 17. ¶ *Smote upon his breast.* A natural gesture, which the heart dictates to all men. It was a proof of the sincerity of his grief, and an open confession of it. ¶ *God be merciful to me a sinner.* Be merciful to a sinner, who has not one merit or good work to plead. When he had cast away all trust in himself, and could pray only as a sinner, he had reached, without knowing it, the point of spiritual wisdom, where God hears and answers prayer. It was a happy thing for him, not that he was a wicked man, but that being despised by men, he learned to throw away all confidence in himself. And thus is he the example of *how* we should pray. We are not to imitate his sins, but his humbleness. "We must be holy in all conversation and godliness, and yet as humble as if we had no virtues at all."—*Waterland.* Our best services are imperfect. Nothing that we do can merit forgiveness of our sins, or fit us for heaven. As the holiest man must die, so must he come down

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for [a]every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 [b]Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is* God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, [c]Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, [d]Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: [e]sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard *it*, said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, [f]The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [g]There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

a Ch. 14. 11. *b* 1 Cor. 14. 20; 1 Pet. 2. 2. *c* Ex. 20. 12, 16; Deut. 5. 16–20; Rom. 13. 9. *d* Eph. 6. 2; Col. 3. 20. *e* 1 Tim. 6. 19. *f* Jer. 32. 17; Matt. 19. 26. *g* Deut. 33. 9.

on his knees and confess himself worthy of death, and pray as a pardoned sinner for grace. The publican's litany is in many mouths now. Experience will show whether it is in many hearts. Be wise, and repent truly of your sins, with a prudent care against mistakes. Shun boastful pride and equally pretentious humility.

14. *Justified.* Forgiven, accepted, comforted. God pardoned him and had mercy upon him, sinner as he was. God loved him and gave him grace, not because he was a sinner, but because he distrusted himself, and had that loving faith in the Divine mercy, that he believed it would reach and save even such a wretch as he was. He was certain, with such feelings, to turn away from sin, and purpose a new life, and was mercifully loved by God, as if he had never been the sinner he was. ¶ *For every one.* See note, Luke xiv. 11.

15–30. See Matt. xix. 13–30.

31–33. See Matt. xx. 17–19; Mark x. 32–34.

30 Who shall not receive manifold[a] more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

31 ¶ Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and [b]all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on;

33 And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

35 ¶ And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging;

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, [c]glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

CHAPTER XIX.

AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

a Job 42. 10. *b* Ps. 22; Is. 53.

c Ch. 5. 26; Acts 4. 21; & 11. 18.

34. *Understood none of these things.* Jesus now journeys up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Dedication, in December. His ministry was drawing rapidly to a close. He warns His followers against the coming time of terror. They cannot understand,—will not believe Him, but go on to the end, without one spiritual conviction of the Gospel truth, of the great work of a Saviour dying for the sins of the world. Only the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost, could open their hearts to understand the deep truths passing around them. The Messiah of their carnal fancy was to live for ever, a glorious, splendid David, and Solomon, successful in war, magnificent in peace, the ruler of a paradisaic world. They could not give up a dream so soothing to their natural hearts. Let us ponder wisely on this perversity of the human mind, and struggle against the carnal wishes and affections which too often lead us astray.

35–43. See notes, Matt. xx. 29–34. "In like manner, Jesus by His touch cures the mind that is blinded by worldly lusts, and gives light for this end, that we may follow His footsteps."—*Erasmus.*

CHAPTER XIX.

1. *And Jesus entered.* This event happened on the passage of our Lord through the town of Jericho. Compare

2 And behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that *way*.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down:

Matt. xx. 29; and Mark x. 42. It is supposed by some that there were two distinct portions of that famous place, through one of which, either a suburb or the ruins of a former town, ran the road.

2. *Zaccheus.* A Jew, as his name shows. It signifies the just or innocent man, which agrees with his public character. ¶ *Chief among the publicans.* One who, by his superior wealth, was able to receive the higher offices of his trade. A whole province was farmed, or hired out to single persons, who employed deputy collectors to receive its taxes, and were necessarily responsible for the payment of the income of the province. ¶ *He was rich.* As his office of chief collector of taxes shows. Despised as the publicans were by the Jews, there was nothing absolutely wrong in their occupation. Taxes are necessary, and of course persons to collect them must be found. The pernicious system of the ancient governments in collecting them, encouraged abuses, and made the publicans hateful. Added to this, the Jews in their bigotry, held it sinful to pay taxes to a Gentile king, and of course abominated the agents who collected them.

3. *Who He was.* It was not the wish of a moment. He had heard of Jesus, and wished to see Him, and learn of Him who He was, i. e., whether He was the Messiah, or only a prophet. It was not an idle curiosity, but the intelligent desire of a man who had very conscientious rules of acting toward God. His case may be profitably compared with the story of Cornelius. Acts x. 2–7. ¶ *The press.* The crowd of people mentioned in the story of the blind beggar. They were expecting from Jesus, at this time, some signal which should rally them into a formidable outbreak, and crowded around Him in eager expectation, Verse 11. ¶ *Little of stature.* A short man. Greater in heart than in person.

4. *A Sycamore.* In Greek, a *fig-mulberry.* It had fruit as a fig, and leaves resembling the mulberry; of course, entirely different from the tree called by this name in America. Zaccheus, as a publican, was too humble to seek more than a passing view of Jesus.

5. *And saw him.* Not only saw him, but understood the whole secret history of his heart, and the desire which had brought him there. He saw the soul in him struggling to live a holy life, and too self-distrustful to come nearer to Him, and He calls him nearer, and honors him publicly. ¶ *Abide at thy house.* Jesus did this beyond his expectation, as a mark of favor to him. But we who have studied the mercy of the blessed Lord, do not wonder at this invitation. There were multitudes in Jericho who thronged Jesus to see Him, and thought, perhaps, they did Him honor by their presence. He passed them by to bless two blind beggars, who had faith to be healed. Many rich priests and Pharisees could have been found there to offer Him a lodging, but He values more the table of the publican, who was hungering after true righteousness. To the true Christian, the opportunity of doing good is a rule superior to his individual ease or pleasure. John iv. 32–34. Had Zaccheus been only a rich man, Jesus would have passed him. It was the glimmer of a true faith, which needed help and instruction, which turned His sacred feet to his house.

7. *A man that is a sinner.* That is,

for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false[a] accusation, I restore *him* [b]four-fold.

9 And Jesus said unto him,

a Ch. 3. 14. b Ex. 22. 1; 1 Sam. 12. 3; 2 Sam. 12. 6.

a publican. They cared not to separate the individual from his trade, but gave him the name, because he was a publican, and collected taxes for their masters, the pagan Romans. Zaccheus may have been a bad and extortionate usurer at a former period, but we need better witnesses than that crowd to prove the charge. They were, perhaps, angry that this mark of favor had been shown to a publican, in a city where many courtiers and priests resided.

8. *The half of my goods I give to the poor.* Two interpretations of these words appear to claim our attention. 1. Zaccheus noticed the anger of the people, and speaks in this manner, to justify Jesus in entering his house. He declares that he has not been extortionate or unjust; that he has given half his income to the poor, and that whenever he discovered that he had wronged any one unintentionally, he restored full measure. And this he may have said without boasting, only desiring to justify himself from the falsehood of the crowd. David, Job, and others, have used language as strong, *of their innocence towards men.* So by this explanation he refers to his past life. "The half of my goods as I gain them, i. e., the half of my income, I am in the habit of giving to the poor, and I restore always fourfold, wherever I have done wrong." An honest and liberal man might properly have said this much. 2. The other explanation interprets the words in a future sense, as the resolution of one who has been evil and extortionate, but changes his plan. "The half of my goods I do now give to the poor, and will restore whatever is fraudulently in my hands." It is said as a proof of his repentance, to which a resolution of restitution is always essential. Many good and learned men lean to this interpretation. The reader needs only the suggestion of them, to consider them carefully for himself. ¶ *If I have taken.* Whenever it comes to my knowledge that I have taken any tax by injustice. As many subordinates were under him, this watchfulness was especially requisite. ¶ *By false accusation.* By making out false estimates of the taxes due on any property. This is a common mode of extortion in the East, and is eluded by the inhabitants adopting every possible device to conceal their wealth from the tax-gatherers. See Luke xiv. 14. ¶ *Fourfold.* He observed the rigor of the Mosaic law in its extreme requirements. Ex. xxii. 1. He was not satisfied with any thing short of the most entire restitution. Money wrongfully obtained, is better lost than kept. It is better to lose temporal possessions, than a conscience void of offence. Zaccheus may have then first entertained this resolution. It seems rather to have grown with him, and to be uttered here as a principle on which he had been acting. A convert would not be apt to discriminate so nicely of a sudden; while one who had meditated deeply upon the matter would have guided his habits by a settled rule. He was not a vile sinner in the sense that the crowd had meant the reproach, though he was a publican. His example is set in the part of the service of the Holy Communion called the Offertory, or the giving of alms, as one which may be properly imitated by Christians in the spirit of it, if not in the letter.

9. *Salvation is come to this house.*

This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a [a]son of Abraham.

10 For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should [b]immediately appear.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

a Rom. 4. 11, 12, 16; Gal. 3. 7.

b Acts 1. 6.

To this man, by the coming of Jesus to give him the instruction of the Gospel. The believers in Jesus, during His ministry on earth, were not all required to leave their homes, and follow Him through the land. Zaccheus, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and others remained in the situations in whith He found them. ¶ *The son of Abraham.* He is not only a Jew, but "an Israelite indeed." Zaccheus had a faith like that of Abraham. He tried to keep a conscience void of offence, looked for a Saviour, eagerly expected the promises, and was obedient when the Messiah was presented to him. He had a faith good as far as his knowledge went, and now receiving greater light, he receives the assurance of salvation, being a true son of Him who is the father of the faithful. Rom. iv. 11.

10. See Matt. xviii. 11.

11. *He spake a parable.* He spake this to the hearers, in order to correct a false impression, that He was about to assume the state and power of a king. This parable resembles the one recorded by St. Matthew, xxv. 14–28. It differs from it, however, in many important features. That was delivered after Jesus had entered and left Jerusalem—and was sitting with His disciples upon the Mount of Olives; this in the house of Zaccheus. That relates to the last judgment; this to the fall of Jerusalem. In that the heir delivers different sums to his servants; in this the nobleman gives to each an equal trust. Other features of the two parables differ. And in this there is one design predominant, to suppress the carnal ambition of the disciples for temporal power. Jesus warns them that He is to *depart*, in order to receive His kingdom. Meanwhile He would leave with them solemn trusts, which they were to employ for His service with diligence, among a people who would not have Him to reign over them. ¶ *Nigh to Jerusalem.* Jericho was about seventeen miles north-east of Jerusalem. The Passover was near. Great crowds of Jews would be in the city at the feast. Every thing seemed favorable to an outbreak against the Roman government. ¶ *Immediately appear.* That Jesus would give the word, and marshal His servants into an army, assume royal state, and begin His reign in the city. This vain dream, drawn from the letter of prophecy, and cherished by the carnal hearts of the disciples, blinded their eyes to the spiritual kingdom of Christ, even to the last. Acts i. 6.

12. *A certain nobleman.* A man of princely parentage, and having a claim to succeed to a kingdom. The story of Archelaus is mentioned in this connection, as having some resemblance to this parable. He was left by Herod as his heir to the kingdom of Judea. It was necessary to obtain possession of it by going to the Emperor of Rome. The Jews sent an embassy after him to Augustus, to prevent, if possible, the success of his journey. Archelaus however was confirmed, and returned to reign in Judea. *Josephus' Antiquities*, xvii. 11. The Saviour may have framed His parable with a reference to this story, but the likeness is not to be pressed. It may have given point to the parable in the minds of the hearers, who were familiar with the events of their own history. ¶ *Went into a far country.* Herod and his son had gone to Rome,

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten ‖pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the ‖money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

‖ *Mina* here translated a pound is 12¼ oz., which, according to 5s. the oz. is £3. 2s. 6d.

‖ Greek *silver*, and so v. 23.

which was a long way off from Judea, to receive their investiture. Our Lord was to depart to the regions invisible to us, that ascending up on high, He might receive the reward of His obedience.

13. *Ten pounds.* The *mina* here translated pound was equal to near $25. There is no significance which we can now see in the number ten—though the Fathers delighted to represent it as the number of perfection, since, "counting up to it, one begins again with unity." As a way of securing his property during his absence, the prince divides it among many, that if he should return, he may be more likely to receive some or all of it. The servants represent the disciples of Jesus; not the twelve only, but all those who are employed in the sacred duties of the Church. The pounds represent, not what we now call *a man's talents* or natural gifts, but those offices of usefulness and trust in the Church which were the peculiar care of the Redeemer. ¶ *Occupy till I come.* Keep and use these pounds, in such ways as to increase them. The disciples received a stewardship which they were to exercise for the glory of the absent Prince, until His return. 1st As the parable contemplates in Judea—till the fall of the city. 2d. In the world at large. 1 Cor. xii. 4–11; Eph. iv. 7.

14. *His citizens.* Men in former times gathered more into walled cities than now, and the citizens of a province would commonly be the ones to take the lead of other subjects, in an affair of this kind. ¶ *Hated him.* This was true of the Jews in the case of Herod and his son, and for good reasons. It was true of them also, that they hated Jesus without a cause. The wickedness of the former they feared; the spiritual character of the Lord Jesus they would not love. ¶ *Sent a message.* Sent it by an embassy, who were charged to plead with the Emperor against the suit of the prince seeking the kingdom. This is an ornament of the parable, put in to give life to the story. It could not happen in the case which it illustrated. No sinners can make one plea to high Heaven, to disturb the reign of the Prince of Peace. Infidels may blaspheme, but their curses recoil upon themselves, and sink them to a lower doom.

15. See notes, Matt. xxv. 19.

17. *Ten cities.* Of his new kingdom. This applies to the return of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem. He then received as it were a larger kingdom; for thenceforward, the Church was more evidently *universal*, going forth to take in the whole world. It alludes also to the last day, when a reward shall be given to the faithful proportionate to their fidelity in the kingdom on earth. See Matt. xxv. 20, 21.

20. *A napkin.* A linen cloth suited to this use. He had not used it in trade, that it might increase. There are two

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, [a]Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

[a] 2 Sam. 1. 16; Job 15. 6.

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qualities of wealth, money and time, and the customs of men have established the rules of integrity in regard to them. The parable supposes that these ten favored friends of the prince were solemnly bound by their duty to him, not only to keep his money, but to use *the time* in which it was in their hands in increasing it. Jesus intrusted to His disciples offices and gifts of teaching, governing and edifying the Church, in His absence. If one of them filled an office, without doing any thing, it would be no excuse that he had not done any active wrong. He had neglected a trust, and ruined souls by his inertness. A pilot who sleeps while his vessel is going on the rocks, is only less guilty than one who deliberately puts it there.

21. *An austere man.* A rigid and severe character. The word first applied to sour, unripe fruit. A man of this kind is distasteful to the indolent, as he does not yield to the weak excuses of the self-indulgent. ¶ *Thou takest up, &c.* We know not whether to wonder most at the weakness or insolence of this excuse. The subject cavils that the prince claims the natural, lawful gain of his own money, and the account of the time of his people, in his absence. The excuses of wicked men are as foolish. They grieve that God requires of them all that He has given them "richly to enjoy," and will be content with no less than their supreme affection. See Matt. xxv. 24.

22. *Out of thine own mouth.* Granting that I am that severe master you thought me, your duties remained the same; you were bound by policy, as well as right, to make some better use of my property than you have done. If we are surprised at the subject giving a reason so unreasonable, we may reflect on the strange fact that men never are so absurd in their worldly business, as they are in religion. Therefore our Lord, when He gives similitudes which shadow the excuses of the wicked for not doing their duty towards Him, had recourse to the absurd, in order that their madness might the more openly appear. See Luke xiv. 19, 20.

23. *The bank. The table*, i. e., of the money changers. There were no banks, in our sense, in those days. See Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *Usury.* Interest, literally, *that which it would produce or gain.*

25, 26. *And they said, &c.* Some of the servants were surprised and remonstrated. This is thrown in to give force to that rule of the Divine economy, which follows. ¶ *For I say.* "I say emphatically as a rule of my kingdom, by which I will be governed, he that is intrusted by me with an office, and uses diligence in it to serve me and increase my dignity, to him I will constantly add marks of my increased regards; while they who love their ease and self-interest, and so keep my trusts in a napkin and render them use-

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

PASSION WEEK—SUNDAY.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you;* in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither.*

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him?* thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: [a]and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38 Saying, [b]Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: [c]Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, [d]the stones would immediately cry out.

41 ¶ And when he was come

a 2 Kings 9. 13; Matt. 21. 7; John 12. 14.

b Ps. 118. 26; Ch. 13. 35. *c* Ch. 2. 14; Eph. 2. 14. *d* Hab. 2. 11.

less, and as though they did not have them, I will deprive them of such trusts, and reject them from favor. This is the rule of the Christian Church. See note, Matt. xiii. 12.

28–39. See notes, Matt. xxi. 1–16. *And it came to pass.* St. Luke thus marks the silent passing over of three months and more. From v. 29, begin the transactions of the first day of PASSION WEEK, Palm Sunday, March 21st. A.D. 28. True Era 34.

40. *The stones, &c.* See Heb. ii. 11. An hyperbole. It was useless to seek to hide the truth which was then heard in the cry of the multitudes. God was now bringing events to pass, which would make every stone of their city a

near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall [a]cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee [b]even with the ground, and thy children within thee: and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because [c]thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought,

46 Saying unto them,[d] It is written, My house is the house

a Is. 29. 3, 4; Jer. 6. 3, 6. 7, 8; Mic. 3. 12. *b* 1 Kings 9. *c* Dan. 9. 24; 1 Pet. 2. 12. *d* Is. 56. 7.

witness of them. Says Bede: "At the crucifixion of our Lord, when His kinsfolk were silent for fear, the stones and rocks sang forth, while after that He gave up the ghost, the earth was moved, and the rocks were rent, and the graves opened."

41–44. *He wept over it.* Three times our Saviour is said to have wept: in this prophetic foresight of the devoted city, which was so soon to fill up the measure of its sins, and to go down to destruction; once when His heart was touched by the grief of others (John xi. 35); and again when it was wrung by the unspeakable agonies of the garden of Gethsemane. Heb. v. 7. While the disciples were exulting over their vain fancies, His eyes looked onward to the horrors that were coming fast upon the city for its cruelties. Alas, for the carnal heart! It blinds our eyes in the midst of the most precious privileges. What Christian but would have knelt there and cried to Jesus, Lord, give me grace to walk one hour with Thee in Spirit. What Christian but can look back at times in his own life, when he was trifling or worldly, as the disciples, and yet Jesus had come near to him, to open to him some wider view, some deeper consolation of truth. ¶ *If thou hadst known.* Would that thou hadst been wise to see and know what has been so fully revealed—thy day of grace. ¶ *They are hid.* Not by any act or decree of God, but by perverseness in the Jews. They had become so hostile to truth, that now they would not see it, though almost forced upon them. It was hid only as the sun is hid to the bloodshot eye of passion, which will not look upon its light. ¶ *For the days shall come.* This happened about thirty years afterwards. ¶ *Cast a trench.* The very scene was then before the prophetic eye of Jesus. The Romans cast a trench and wall around the whole city, in order to keep in all persons, and starve them into surrender. The trench was nearly five miles long, and had thirteen castles, placed at intervals—a terrific barrier to a famishing population. ¶ *Not leave in thee, &c.* See notes, Matt. xxxiv. 2.

45, 46. See Matt. xxi. 12, 13.

47. *Daily.* As long as He could with safety, till His hour came. He left it on Tuesday near sunset, to go to the Mount of Olives, and returned on Thursday near sunset, to die there. This fact of His daily teaching in the temple was mentioned by our Saviour, on the night of His capture, as an evidence that He had not concealed Himself from justice. Lu. xxii. 53.

48. *And could not find.* They could not make up their minds what to do. The case was perplexing to them, and they had constant consultations together before they could resolve on any course. ¶ *For all the people, &c.* Jerusalem was crowded at the time by a large number of stranger Jews, who

of prayer, but ye have made it a [a]den of thieves.

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were [‖]very attentive to hear him.

CHAPTER XX.

PASSION WEEK.—TUESDAY.

AND it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him*, with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by [b]what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it was*.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among

a Jer. 7. 11. ‖ Or, *hanged on Him;* Acts 16. 14.

b Acts 4. 7; & 7. 27.

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listened attentively to Jesus. The rulers dared not offend them. On one side was the heathen governor, who neither trusted nor loved them. On the other, the crowds of Jews, who were eagerly looking for a king of their own faith. How to seize the One who claimed to be so, without enraging the people, they could not find. How easy had it been for the Saviour to have destroyed them and their plans, by the very power which they brought against Him, the crowd; but He yielded, and was led "as a lamb to the slaughter," that as a Lamb of God He might take away the sins of the world.

CHAPTER XX.

1–8. Jesus answers the members of the Sanhedrim. See notes, Matt. xxi. 23–27; Mark xi. 27–33.

9–19. Parable of the vineyard. See notes, Matt. xxi. 33–44; Mark xii. 1-11.

20–38. Jesus answers the Pharisees

themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, [a]The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: [b]but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God ‖truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cesar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Shew me a ‖penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cesar's.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees (which deny that there is any resurrection), and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, [c]Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her;

a Ps. 118. 22; Matt. 21. 42. *b* Dan. 2. 34, 35.

‖ Or, *of a truth*. ‖ See Matt. 18. 28. *c* Deut. 25. 5.

and Sadducees. See Matt. xxii. 15–33; Mark xii. 13–27.

39, 40. A lawyer asks a question. See Matt. xxii. 34–40; Mark xii. 28–34.

41–44. A question in return. See Matt. xxii. 41–46; Mark xii. 35–37.

45–47. Jesus, after these trials of doctrine, and truth with the Jewish rulers addresses the people, upholding their legitimate authority, but condemning their corruptions with awful severity. See Matt. xxiii. 1–33; Mark xii. 38–40.

and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering, said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage;

36 Neither can they die any more: for they [a]are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the [b]children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, [c]even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: [d]for all live unto him.

39 ¶ Then certain of the scribes answering, said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that, they durst not ask him any *question at all.*

41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, [e]The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

45 ¶ Then in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples,

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

CHAPTER XXI.

AND he looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow, casting in thither [‖]two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor

[a] 1 Cor. 15. 42, 49, 52; 1 John 3. 2. [b] Rom. 8. 23. [c] Ex. 3. 6. [d] Rom. 6. 10, 11; Acts 17. 28. [e] Ps. 110. 1; Acts 2. 34. [‖] See Mark 12. 42.

CHAPTER XXI.

1-4. See this explained in notes, Mark xii. 41–44. *Offerings of God.* Treasure given for the use of the services of the temple. ¶ *Penury.* Poverty. God has not respect so much to the amount of alms, as to the spirit with which it is given.

5, 6. *Spake of the temple.* They imagined that it would be very precious in the eyes of the Messiah, and would be of itself a dignified instrument in the conversion of the world, and the centre of a vast and increasing service, making a splendid show in the concourse of future worshippers. See Is. ii. 2; Mic.

widow hath cast [c]more than they all.

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 ¶ [b]And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones, and gifts, he said,

6 *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, [c]Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* ‖and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars, and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass, but the end *is* not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences: and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and [d]into prisons, [e]being brought before kings and rulers [f]for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you [g]for a testimony.

14 Settle *it* therefore in your

a 2 Cor. 8. 12. *b* Matt. 24; Mark 13. *c* Eph. 5. 6; 2 Thes. 2. 3. ‖ Or, *and The time;* Matt. 3. 2; & 4. 17. *d* Acts 4. 3; & 5. 18; & 12. 4; & 16. 24. *e* Acts 25. 23. *f* 1 Pet. 2. 13. *g* Phil. 1. 28; 2 Thes. 1. 5.

iv. Jesus instantly warns them of its coming destruction, as if to teach them, indirectly, that all external grandeur must cease from the Jewish system, and the Jewish nation be scattered abroad, before His kingdom could come forth in its true glory. They looked to earthly influences, splendor, majesty, and a magnificent service. He turns their attention off from these, that they may be ready to lean for success on the simple power of the Spirit of God. ¶ *Gifts.* The temple was adorned with many ornaments and offerings which had been deposited there during its existence by the Jews. Especially had Herod contributed to it. See notes, Matt. xxiv. 1, 2.

7–36. The prophecies of this chapter are the same as those recorded by St. Matthew, ch. xxiv. They are explained in the notes on that chapter. The fall of the city is the type of the end of the world: for both events are the conclusions of their Dispensations or Covenants. There is occasion here for only a few explanations of single words or phrases.

11. *Fearful sights and great signs.* Josephus instances a flaming sword seen hanging over the city, a portentous light over the temple, for half an hour, as bright as noonday, and other prodigies. Tacitus, the Roman historian, mentions them also, having heard or read of them.

12, 13. *Synagogues, &c.* See Mark xiii. 9, 10.

14. *Not to meditate.* This rule was only for the time. It was necessary that the first Christians should avoid the words of man's wisdom, and be known chiefly as plain witnesses of *facts.* And the New Testament is now precious to

hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, [a]which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 [b]And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* [c]of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,

a Acts 6. 10. *b* Mic. 7. 6; Mark 13. 12. *c* Acts 7. 59; & 12. 2.

all men, from this characteristic, that it contains no subtleties, but is mostly engaged with *the great facts* of our religion, which the writers have not warped or modified by their own inferences.

15. *Mouth.* God the Spirit would use them as mouthpieces to announce the truths of Christianity, in ways which they would not have adopted. The testimony of the Apostles before their enemies was always simple and childlike—mostly containing the narrative of the life and death of Christ, and the evident prophecies of the Old Testament in regard to it. Simple as it was, their enemies could not resist or disprove it. See Acts iv. 8–13; xxiv. 10–22.

18. *A hair of your head perish.* A proverb. It means that when the city should be destroyed, no faithful Christian should fall with it. It was exactly fulfilled. The Christians fled to the little town of Pella, and were preserved.

19. *In your patience.* "In the patience which the Gospel gives you, persevere in constancy, without fear or disturbance. Keep your minds free from anxiety, and remember My counsels, and ye shall see the time and way of escape opened for you." Matt. x. 22, 39. After Jerusalem was actually surrounded by the Roman armies, it was again left free for a while, during which time the Christians left it, and were saved. See Matt. xxiv. 13.

22. *All things which are written.* In the prophetic books of the Old Testament. The dispensation established by Moses was to end, and all the curses which had been denounced upon the covenant-breaking nation, by Moses and others, were to be brought upon that most evil and obdurate generation. See Deut. xxxii. Daniel had been informed by the angel concerning the exact date of the end of the Mosaic Covenant. Dan. ix. 26, 27. And Jesus now warns the Christians to take such particular note of these coming events, that they may save themselves, and not be involved in the ruin of the city.

24. *Captive into all nations.* There perished at the siege of Jerusalem 1,100,000 people, according to the historian Josephus; and 97,000 were led away in captivity, to be sold into every part of the

then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22 For these be the days of [d]vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations:

d Dan. 9. 26, 27; Zech. 11. 1.

and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, [a]until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

25 ¶ And there [b]shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

a Dan. 9. 27; & 12. 7; Rom. 11. 25.

b Matt. 24. 29; 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12.

known empire, and subjected to every kind of misery, from their pagan masters. ¶ *Shall be trodden down of the Gentiles.* The city will be in the hands of the Gentiles, who will treat the Jews and their holy places with oppression, during the period of the Gospel dispensation. Jerusalem has never belonged to the Jews since its fall under Titus. With the exception of the times that it has been in the hands of Christians, it has been occupied by the heathen. They despise the original owners, and leave them at this very day but a meagre portion of their city. It is plainly the will of God that the Christian Church shall not possess the city, as yet, nor the Jews, until the plans of His providence in regard to it are fulfilled. Romans, Turks, and Saracens have united to prevent us from paying the homage to the Holy City, which Romanism shows to be but too natural to the carnal mind, and destructive to the simplicity of the Gospel. ¶ *Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* These words have received divers interpretations. Some would have the times of the Gentiles to signify, only the period during which the Romans held the city, till it was rebuilt. Others till the end of the world, during the whole Christian dispensation. Others find here a plain prophecy, that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt during a millennium, and be then literally a fulfilment of all the glorious things said of it by Isaiah and other prophets. And again others give it only a general sense, as fixing no date, or particular limit, other than, till the Gentiles do all that is appointed for them to do. Arguments are offered for each opinion, which deserve study, by those who have the time and means. The times of the Gentiles in contrast to the Jews, seem to refer to *the dispensation of the Christian Church*, in contrast to the Jewish. Those times will end only with the world. And while it seems probable, and to many absolutely revealed, that there will be a remarkable conversion of the Jews, at some future time, when the Gentiles will also be more largely converted and edified by that event (See Rom. xi.); yet we are safe in explaining these words simply as referring to the end of our own dispensation. The Church Catholic is mostly a Church of the Gentiles, i. e., of nations, as distinguished from the one tribe of Jews. Her times will cease only with the second coming of Christ, to judge the world.

25. *Signs in the sun, &c.* See Matt. xxiv. 29. These are figurative expressions, signifying primarily the great distresses and portents which would attend the destruction of the city—but under that type the end of the world. This mode forms the peculiarity of the inspired prophecies of the Bible. Our Lord spake in a language to which His hearers were accustomed.

28. *Your redemption draweth nigh.* When these things are seen, then the Christian Church will be liberated from all subservience to the Jewish rulers, and established in the earth in its own power and right. Many of the events of the book of Acts and the arguments of the Epistles, manifest how difficult it was for the early Christians to emancipate themselves from Jewish prejudices, and rise to the demands of a whole world lying in sin. The Apostle to the Gentiles himself made frequent pilgrimages to Jerusalem. But in another age, the city was in ruins, and the Church was spreading rapidly over the whole world. It was thus, as it were, redeemed or liberated from the narrowness of Judaism.

34. *Take heed to yourselves.* Be watchful, as they who expect great dangers,

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man [a]coming in a cloud, with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your [b]redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

34 ¶ And take [c]heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a [d]snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

a Rev. 1. 7; & 14. 14. *b* Rom. 8. 19. 23. *c* Rom. 13. 13; 1 Thes. 5. 6; 1 Pet. 4. 7.

d 1 Thes. 5. 2; 2 Pet. 3. 10; Rev. 3. 3; & 16. 15.

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and know not when they will come. Many of the exhortations of the Apostles are addressed to this same end. This event they called "the day of the Lord," and constantly sounded the caution to be ready for it. For only a pure and unworldly faith could make the early Christians give up all in the hour of danger, and trusting in Christ, leave their homes and venture out into the world. But those same exhortations do verily pass beyond that event, and now warn us to be prepared for the coming of the great event which it *foreshadowed* —the coming of Christ to judgment. 1 Thess. v. 1, 6; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 13. ¶ *Overcharged.* Stupefied, made dull, as those who cannot see danger or flee from it in time. ¶ *Surfeiting and drunkenness.* Both words imply the *sensuality* which is the opposite of a keen and clear foresight. They would disable a man for rapid flight, before a pursuing enemy. And they represent also that love of ease and carnal-mindedness, which blind the eyes of Christians to their spiritual dangers. This style is common in the Epistles. Jude, 18.

35. *As a snare.* Suddenly, unexpected and fatal, as the hidden snare is to the frightened captive bird. 1 Thess. v. 2, 4; Rev. iii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 52.

36. *To stand before the Son of man.* To do this here on the earth, signifies to be approved by Him, made one of His servants, and to continue in the kingdom of grace. Eph. vi. 13. And thus the early Christians who escaped the fate of the wicked Jewish nation, were approved, and became useful ministers of the word. To stand before Christ worthily in a higher sense, signifies to be pardoned by His grace, and received to the rewards of eternal life by Him at the last day. Rom. xiv. 40.

37, 38. *Tuesday evening* was now come, and St. Luke sums up the teachings of this day with this fact, that Jesus was thus occupied in instructing the people. This was the last day of His public work. And it forms a solemn farewell to the nation for whose salvation He had now for three years labored. He had come to the temple daily from the region without the city early in the mornings, and again left the city at night to avoid the malice of the rulers, until His hour should come. This

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to [a]stand before the Son of man.

37 And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

[a] Ps. 1. 5; Eph. 6. 13. [b] Ps. 2. 2; Acts 4. 27.

CHAPTER XXII.

Wednesday.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

2 And the chief [b]priests and scribes sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people.

3 ¶ Then entered [c]Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and

[c] John 13. 2, 27.

night He seems to have supped at the house of Simon the leper, whom He had formerly cured. Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. There He was anointed by the woman, and rebuked Judas for his parsimony. And on this same evening the Sanhedrim was in secret session, to devise means to get Jesus into their hands, and put him to death. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4.

CHAPTER XXII.

1, 2. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 1, 2. This was Wednesday of Passion week, marked in Dr. Jarvis's Chronology as March 24. The Evangelists have given no records of this day, except the events occurring after sunset, which, according to Jewish computation, belong to the day following, the "first day of unleavened bread." It was the practice of the Jews to put away all leaven from their dwellings on this day, and the leaven is removed from the company of disciples by the voluntary separation of Judas, whose act of treachery has made this day famous in the week. It has ever since been observed as a day of fasting and prayer. The thirteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel is occupied with the time passing in this interval.

3. *Then entered Satan into Judas.* The same language is held in the Old Testament of evil spirits entering and swaying the hearts of wicked men, after they have become reprobate. 1 Sam. xvi. 14, 16. Thus we learn that the continued indulgence of any evil passion, at length grieves away the Holy Spirit, and leaves the heart a victim and instrument for evil spirits. Man becomes a terrible criminal when under the sway of Satan, and may be hurried to any vice or outrage, when God has given him up to his influence. Matt. xii. 45; 1 Pet. v. 8. The prevailing temper of Judas was *avarice*, and by that lust for gold, Satan now leads him captive at his will. Satan first conspires in the Sanhedrim, and then enters the heart of the traitor, to bring his wicked plans to a consummation. ¶ *Surnamed Iscariot.* Or the man of Carioth. There was another Judas among the twelve, called also Thaddeus and Lebbeus. John xiv. 22. ¶ *Being of the number of the twelve.* And therefore acquainted with the private haunts of Jesus, and able to lead the rulers to Him in secret. This trust in Judas heightens his guilt, and makes him an everlasting scorn. Ps. xli. 5. "But many shudder at the wickedness of Judas, yet do not guard against it. For whosoever despises the laws of truth and love, betrays Christ, who is truth and love. Above all when he sins, not from infirmity or ignorance, but after the likeness of Judas, seeks opportunity when no one

communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and [a]covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them ‖in the absence of the multitude.

THURSDAY.

7 ¶ [b]Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, ‖With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.

16 For I say unto you, [c]I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves.

18 For I say unto you, I will

a Zech. 11. 12. ‖ Or, *without tumult.* *b* Matt. 26. 17; Mark 14. 12.

‖ Or, *I have heartily desired.* *c* Ch. 14. 15; Acts 10. 41; Rev. 19. 9.

is present, to change truth for a lie, virtue for crime."—*Bede.* See Heb. vi. 6.

4–6. *Captains.* See notes, Matt. xxvi. 14–16. These officers belonged to the Roman band, which the governor had put at the command of the elders of the Jews, to guard the temple services, and prevent outbreaks in the city. Matt. xxvii. 65. ¶ *Absence of the multitude.* The people were waiting for Jesus to lead them, and were attentive to His teaching. What a lesson of the folly of trusting to, or fearing a mob, is seen in the fact that this same people rejected and crucified Him, when presented to their eyes as already condemned. The rulers wished to take Him in private, that they might gain time for a mock trial before the people should be aware of their plans.

7–13. See Matt. xxvi. 17–19; Mark xiv. 12–16. *Thursday of Passion week.*

15. *With desire I have desired.* A Hebrew phrase, meaning, I have earnestly desired. The reasons for this are beyond our full knowledge. As Jesus desired the salvation of men, so he desired to perfect the work which was given Him to do. This sacred rite was to be instituted by Him, as the last legacy of His humanity to His Church, after which He was only to suffer. He who knew all things in His Divine nature, looks beyond the suffering just before Him, to the glory beyond, and desires to see it completed. ¶ *Before I suffer.* Suffer death upon the cross.

16. See Matt. xxvi. 29.

17. *And He took the cup.* Not the sacramental cup, which is spoken of in v. 20, but the concluding cup of the

not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this[a] do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This [b]cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 ¶ But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* [c]with me on the table.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth[d] as it was determined: but wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

a 1 Cor. 11. 24. *b* 1 Cor. 10. 16.

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was should do this thing.

24 ¶ And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye *shall* not *be* so: [e]but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth

c Ps. 41. 9. *d* Acts 2. 23; & 4. 28. *e* 1 Pet. 5. 3.

Paschal feast. He passes from the rite of the old, to that of the new covenant, with the act of thanksgiving.

19, 20. See Matt. xxvi. 26–28.

21–23. See Matt. xxvi. 21–25. These words of the institution of the Sacrament, so far from describing a mere memorial, do plainly, according to the Articles of our Church, show it to be not only "the badge and token of a Christian man's profession, but rather a certain sure witness, and effectual sign of grace and God's good will toward us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him."—*Art. XXV.* So far is the Church from the Romish superstition, that she confines this "wholesome effect or operation," to "such only as worthily receive the same," after "a heavenly and spiritual manner;" while such as are without faith, though they receive the elements of bread and wine, "yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ."—*Articles XXVIII., XXIX.*

24. *A strife.* The words and actions of Jesus again led the disciples to imagine that the time had come for Him to declare Himself a temporal King. They at once contend for the chief places of that empire which kindled their carnal fancies. So that not one of them had yet gained a glimpse of the true work of Christ. While His mind looked to a fearful death and the tomb, as the path of His glory, they are fired with gross, carnal dreams, which are at variance with the truth. We should meditate on these words, until we can see and feel for them, both shame, for the frailty of our common nature, and pity for them, when the fatal truth of the humiliation of Jesus flashed suddenly upon them.

25. *The kings of the Gentiles.* Jesus warns them, by this contrast of earthly kingdoms with His, that a different law was to hold in His. Earthly kings use their power for their own pleasure and majesty, but it is not so in the Church. Its highest offices are meant not for the glorification of individuals, but for the spiritual good of all. ¶ *Benefactors.* Soft and flattering titles were given to the heathen kings by their courtiers. Especially many of them affected the title, Energetes, or Benefactor, to strengthen their power with the people, by stimulating them to

let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me,[a] And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

a Is. 53. 12.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

39 ¶ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

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this natural duty the disciples had been restrained for a little season, and for a peculiar object. Now that they are to become the visible leaders of Christians in the world, Jesus invests them, by these significant hints, with the right to the natural defences of character and life. For His miraculous support was thereupon to be withdrawn, and in the coming times of persecution, they and their successors were to defend themselves in dangers and perplexities by their own prudence, heightened and sanctified by the precepts of the Gospel and the spirit of wisdom. The precepts now given belong to all ages, being among the last given by the Lord. And in the centuries which are passing, the Church is sustained by grace, using natural means, not those which are perpetually miraculous. Self-defence is as lawful to Christians, as the support of their lives by labor and industry. ¶ *Let him sell his garment.* Let him find proper means for the defence of his life, not by wrath and anger, but, as St. Ambrose says, in a seeming ability to be revenged, without the will. We must look to the spirit of such precepts as this, not to the letter. Jesus does not encourage us to any defence which Scripture or conscience render improper.

37. *This that is written.* See Is. liii. 12. All which had been foretold of Christ by the prophets, especially concerning His humiliation, was then to be fulfilled. ¶ *Was reckoned among the transgressors.* He died the death of one who had been convicted of breaking the laws, and was crucified between two malefactors. Jesus was holy, harmless, and undefiled. But the Jewish rulers tried Him by false witnesses, and pretended to judge Him to be guilty of blasphemy: 1st. As speaking against the temple (Matt. xxvi. 61); 2d. As making Himself the Son of God, and therefore equal with God. Mark xiv. 62–64. And as to all who do not believe Him, as to the first charge, misrepresented (John ii. 21); and as to the second, verily proved to be that which He claimed (John viii. 54–59; x. 30), it seems hard how they can hesitate to make common cause with the Pharisees. So was our Lord overborne by falsehood and malice, and to the shame of our common nature, "numbered among the transgressors." ¶ *Have an end.* Are now about to end. The prophecies of His sufferings were nearly accomplished. It lacked now but a few hours of His cry of pain, "It is finished."

38. *Here are two swords.* The disciples understood Him after their carnal fancies, and think of instant fighting. They may have been furnished with these weapons, on the spur of the moment, as they seem to call His attention to them for the first time. If they had then been obliged to depend on swords, not a hundred would have sufficed. For the lessons of that awful night two were enough. We may note that the ever-stirring Peter was armed with one, and ready to keep his promise in a carnal sense, that is, by actual fighting. ¶ *It is enough.* The words of one who sees the trouble coming on those that will not understand. He turns from the subject, as from one on which they

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing,‖ remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And[a] being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him, saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 ¶ And one of them smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is

‖ Greek, *willing to remove.*

a John 12. 27; Heb. 5. 7.

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could not be taught except by experience. How humble should we be, in the search of spiritual things, and in our opinion of ourselves, when we see this invincible ignorance in those who had been so long taught by the wisest of all teachers.

39–46. See Matt. xxvi. 30–46; Mark xiv. 26–42.

43. *An angel strengthening Him.* Perhaps the Archangel Gabriel, who had before fulfilled all other commissions in respect to His human nature. The agony of Christ was so intense in these terrible and mysterious hours as to overpower His human nature. He saw a world ruined, Himself to combat for it with sin and death—mysterious pangs from the Infinite Father, such as no tongue can tell. He fainted under them, and was sustained for the final struggle by the ministration of an angel. We draw hence a consideration of the supernatural capability of suffering which was in our Saviour. A man's strength would have sufficed for a man's sorrows, especially when the most violent of His pangs were still distant. But here, under the awful pressure of His higher power of seeing sin and sorrow, the man's power fails and craves support from the guardian angel. Heb. v. 7.

44. *In an agony.* See notes, Matt. xxvi. 42–44.

47–53. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 48–56.

48 *Betrayest thou, &c.* Jesus gives the traitor no upbraiding word, but shows him that He perceived the design of his falsehood, in keeping up the show of friendship after he had become a betrayer. As Peter was won back by a look, may not this imperturbable calmness, this clear, yet unrevengeful laying before Judas his sin, have stabbed

your hour, and the power of darkness.

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

Good Friday. A. M.

58 [a]And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ And the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote *him*.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

66 ¶ [b]And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came together, and led him into their council,

67 Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe.

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

69 [c]Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witnesses? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

a Matt. 26. 71; Mark 14. 6, 9; John 18. 25.

b Acts 4. 26; See Acts 22. 5. *c* Mark 14. 62; Heb. 1. 3; & 8. 1.

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him to the quick, and heaped on his head those coals of remorse that drove him to despair?

50. *One of them.* Simon Peter. It was thus he understood his promise. But it was easier to fight than to bear ignominy. The heart that could dare a crowd, faltered before disgrace.

54–62. See Matt. xxvi. 71–75; Mark xiv. 69–72; John xviii. 25–27.

63–71. See Matt. xxvi. 65–68; Mark xiv. 63–65. The passage, verses 24–30, forms the Gospel for the Feast of St. Bartholomew, supposed by many to be the same as Nathaniel, mentioned by St. John. He afterwards preached the Gospel as far eastward as the Indies, and was there martyred by those savages. "O Almighty and Everlasting God, who didst give to Thine Apostle

CHAPTER XXIII.

AND[a] the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow*[b] perverting the nation, and [c]forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a King.

3 And Pilate [d]asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests, and *to* the people,[e] I find no fault in this man.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

a Matt 27. 2; Mark 15. 1; John 18. 28.
b Acts 17. 7.
c See Matt. 17. 27; & 22. 21; Mark 12. 17; 1 Tim. 6. 13.
d 1 Pet. 2. 22.

Bartholomew grace truly to believe and preach Thy word: grant we beseech Thee unto Thy Church to love that word which he believed, and both to preach and receive the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 1. 2.

2. *We found this fellow.* The word fellow is not in Greek, though it is properly inserted in the English; as the want of a name for the Saviour implies that they pointed at Him as they said this, with something like contempt. *We have found*, signifies not only a casual discovery of Him, but that they had tried Him by their own court, and found Him guilty of the charges here made against Him. This was false, but Pilate had no means of knowing this, as he was not privy to their turbulent proceedings during the night. ¶ *Forbidding, &c.* They made this the first charge, that Jesus, by teaching that He himself was the Messiah, had by implication denied the Empire of Cæsar. They were false to all their feelings as Jews, and showed their unscrupulous hatred in preferring to be faithless as Jews, rather than believe in the mission of Jesus. If Jesus had indeed taught rebellion as they said He did, it would have been their first care to have sustained Him, and Pilate probably knew it. ¶ *Tribute.* The taxes which were collected from a conquered nation; the sign, therefore, of their subjection. ¶ *Cæsar.* Tiberius was Emperor at the time. All the Roman Emperors were called *Cæsars*, just as the Egyptian kings were of old called *Pharaohs*.

3. See Matt. xxvii. 11.

4. *I find no fault.* Pilate took Jesus into the hall of judgment, and examined Him privately. He found that the Jews had delivered Him unto him, through envy, and that His kingdom did not in any wise interfere with the rule or tribute of the Cæsars. Matt. xxvii. 11–14; John xviii. 33–38. Pilate then came out and declared his conviction of the innocence of this charge.

5. *The more fierce.* The rulers of the Jews employed the time of Pilate's absence in exciting the populace against Jesus. When the governor proclaimed his opinion, the noise became greater, and the rulers became more fierce in their manner. They shifted the ground of their accusation, and urged that charge which might seem more plausible—that Jesus excited the people to tumults against their rulers. ¶ *Stirreth up the people.* Excites them by His teachings to disorder and rebellion. ¶ *All Jewry.* All the Jews of Judea. ¶ *From Galilee to this place.* From the region of Galilee, which lay to the north of Judea, to the city of Jerusalem, where they then were. They may have mentioned Galilee, to stimulate the passions of Pilate, who is supposed to have had his own reasons for hating the men of that region.

6. *Whether the man were a Galilean.* The bait took, but not as they desired. Pilate at once plans an escape from the

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

8 ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 [a]And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

12 ¶ And the same day [b]Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 ¶ And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him;

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing

a Is. 53. 3.

b Acts 4. 27.

odium of condemning an innocent man, and determines to send Him to Herod.

7. *Herod's jurisdiction.* Galilee was in the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas, the same who had slain John the Baptist. To him, then, belonged the decision of a charge like the present. Pilate, whose passions were not excited, but whose fears were, was just, in this act.

9. *He answered him nothing.* Because Herod asked Him nothing in that judicial manner, which was becoming in a judge. Herod, a curious compound of sin and fear, who had shown to John a character partly kind and attentive, now seeks from Jesus by questions, many things, probably, which were utterly unsuited to the situation in which they stood to each other. Jesus had ended His public teachings. He stood there on the question of guilt or innocence. Herod cared nothing for that, and hence his questionings being impertinent, were unanswered.

11. *His men of war.* Such as formed his retinue at the time; his military officers and soldiers. ¶ *In a gorgeous robe.* Ridiculing Him by dressing Him up in the robes of a king. This was a *white robe*, such as was often worn by the kings of Israel. David speaks of them, as cast off in the flight of the Canaanites, until the ground seemed as if covered with snow. Ps. lxviii. 14. And in the Revelation of St. John, such royal robes were given to the saints. Rev. vi. 11. Herod, more familiar than Pilate with Jewish customs, meant to cast the same ridicule on the Messiah, as the latter did by investing Him in a purple robe. Herod declared Him without fault. Verse 15.

12. *Made friends together.* Feuds and contests among petty rulers are by no means so unnatural as to require us to search for the reason of this enmity. It is suggested that it may have been caused by the act of Pilate, slaying the Galileans, which is mentioned Luke xiii. 1, 2. If so, Herod esteemed the act of sending Jesus to him to be tried as a reparation, and returns the courtesy, in sending Him back with an opinion of His innocence. Herod was contemptuous

worthy of death is done unto him:

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And [a]they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (Who, for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him; I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them, and of the chief priests prevailed.

24 And Pilate [‖]gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder

a Acts 3. 14.

‖ Or, *assented;* Ex. 23. 2.

towards Jesus, and probably sent such a message as implied that he considered Him a harmless enthusiast. Men of the world are often lofty and cool in circumstances where a more enlightened conscience would bid them to walk softly before God.

15. *Worthy of death.* Pilate gives his legal decision, that after examination of Jesus, by himself and Herod, there was no cause for the sentence of death. The charge of perverting the people to overt acts of rebellion was not proved. The claim of Jesus to a kingdom, in matters simply of doctrine and morals, was not of itself sufficient to convict Him as worthy of death. Pilate's duty was therefore plain. He ought to have released Jesus at once. It was his error to fall into the snare of a compromise with his conscience, which hurried him into an act of injustice.

16. *I will therefore chastise Him.* This was said partly to satisfy the Jews, partly in scorn of them, and partly to humble the fanatical claims of Jesus. Though Jesus had done nothing worthy of death, Pilate might suppose that the turbulent people would be enraged at him if he did not inflict some show of punishment. Pilate was not a cowardly man, as his whole life showed; but as many men are found bold in action, but temporizing and variable in policy, so he here sees the right, but compromises with it. It was this that induced him to put Jesus and Barabbas on the same footing before the people—a mistake which the rulers instantly took advantage of, by passing the punishment due to Barabbas over to the innocent Jesus, and bidding the populace raise the cry, Crucify Him!

17. See Matt. xxvii. 15.

18–23. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 20–23.

23–25. See Matt. xxvii. 26; John xix. 13–16.

26. Insert Matt. xxvii. 3–10, and 27–31. See Matt. xxvii. 32. ¶ *Simon.* They first placed the cross on Jesus, until he fainted beneath the load, when stopping Simon, who was passing, they made him bear it. The soldiers did this, being themselves ashamed to bear the cross of a Jew. Says Theophylact, "No one else was willing to bear the cross, because the wood was counted an abomination."

28. *Daughters of Jerusalem.* Ye women dwelling in Jerusalem. The exalted style of our Lord's last words reveal the tension of his agony. These women were to be mothers, when the terrible ruin of the city would happen;

was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

27 ¶ And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 [a]Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 [b]For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

32 And there were also two others, [c]malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they were come to the place which is called ‖ Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34 ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, [d]forgive them: [e]for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

a Is. 2. 19; Hos. 10. 8; Rev. 6. 16; & 9. 6. *b* Prov. 11. 31; Jer. 25. 29; Ezek. 20. 47; & 21. 3. 4; 1 Pet. 4. 17.

c Is. 53. 12. ‖ Or, *the place of a skull.* *d* Acts 7. 6; 1 Cor. 4. 12. *e* Acts 3. 17.

and they had need, therefore, of all their tears for their own intolerable sufferings."

30. *To the mountains.* See Hosea x. 8; Rev. vi. 16; Is. ii. 19. How terrible the state of evil, when men desire death rather than the misery of life. This language is transferred by St. John to the awful scenes of the last day, when the wicked will desire any escape from the impending "wrath of the Lamb."

31. *For if, &c.* This was doubtless a proverb, and easily understood by those who heard it, though it now needs some explanation. This we are able to give by comparing the words of Ezekiel xx. 47, and xxi. 2, 3. By green and dry trees, the prophet means the righteous and the wicked. See Ps. i. 3. A green tree is one filled with life, and which beareth its fruit in due season. We spare such, and cherish them far more than the barren and useless trees. If, then, the proverb signifies, the Romans are allowed by God to do such wickedness and cruelty now towards One who is innocent and obedient to God, how much greater will be their fury, when they are sent forth to destroy the wicked and reprobate nation. Thus the same comparison of His death with their own future woes is kept up.

32, 33. See Matt. xxvii. 35–38.

34. *Father, forgive them.* The mind can only pause with wonder and reverence at this exhibition of mercy and charity in the dying Saviour. It had no parallel—has none now. But before His day there was no such mercy recognized among men. They considered it just to hate their enemies, and died at least in silence, if not with uttered maledictions. It was a lesson to be taught by Him who, as perfect man, could feel all the agonies of humanity, yet in His sinless, perfect wisdom, could trust all vengeance to the hands of a just God. Contrast the death of poor, sinful, but repentant David with this. 1 Kings ii. 1–11. Jesus learned this mercy in the mysteries of that Divine

35 And the [a]people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 ¶ And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

[a] Ps. 22. 17; Zech. 12. 10.

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nature which revealed to Him the perfection of the Deity—to pardon those who were injurious and cruel. So said Isaiah: "He made intercession for the transgressors." Is. liii. 12. The infidel may well contrast this with all mere human exits, and see in it the marks of a Deity. Christians should contemplate it in the light in which Apostles have urged it upon them. Heb. xi. 3, 4; 1 Peter ii. 21–24. ¶ *For they know not what they do.* This is also the testimony of the Apostles. Acts iii. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 8. They might have known it. There was evidence sufficient in the prophecies of the Scriptures (John v. 39), and in the words and works of Christ to have convinced them. John xiv. 11. But their sin lay in wilfully blinding their minds and rejecting this evidence, till, in the heat of their prejudices and passions, they were hurried by Satan on to this crime. Jesus mercifully passes by their sin to offer a prayer for them, urging that single thing, which could seem as an excuse. They did not crucify Him, knowing and believing Him to be their Messiah, but under a false and ignorant prejudice against Him, as an enthusiast and blasphemer. And though their sins of pride and prejudice were great, they were not such as the deliberate crucifixion of Christ as Messiah, would have been. 1 John v. 16. Says St. Chrysostom: "He says, *Forgive them*, if they should repent. For He is gracious to the penitent, if they are willing, after so great wickedness, to wash away their guilt by faith." Many of them did repent. Acts ii. 23, 37, 41.

35–39. See Matt. xxvii. 41–44.

39. *One of the malefactors.* One of the thieves. Both did this at first. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 44. ¶ *If thou be Christ.* This was said in mockery, but was founded on the false opinion of the Messiah, which was common to enemy and friend at that time—that he could not die till he had ruled over the nation in glory. The one thief can reason only as a Jew, the other catches a glimpse of the truth of the mighty conquest of sin and sorrow and death, under the sufferings of the Saviour, and confesses faith in a kingdom even on a cross.

40. *Dost not thou, &c.* "Seeing that you are now actually dying, do you not fear God enough, to abstain from oppressing an innocent man? We suffer only what our crimes have deserved, but we both know that the Jews have delivered Him up to death, without one crime against Him. Let us then beware of joining cause with the oppressors, and prepare to meet God, who suffers this innocent man to suffer, for some reason, which we shall soon learn." ¶ *Same condemnation.* Same kind of death.

42. *Remember me.* Do not forget me, the poor thief dying with you, when

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

you enter in your kingdom. Nehemiah often uses this prayer. See Neh. xiii. 14, 22. The poor thief ventured no plea, to insure remembrance and mercy. "On the cross nails had fastened his hands and feet, and nothing remained free from torture but his heart and tongue. By the inspiration of God, the thief offered to Him the whole which he found free, that as it is written (1 Cor. xiii. 13) 'with the heart he might believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth he might confess unto salvation.' But the *three virtues* the Apostle speaks of, the thief, suddenly filled with grace, both received and preserved on the cross. He had *faith*, for example, who believed that God would reign whom he saw equally dying with himself. He had *hope* who asked for an entrance into His kingdom. He preserved *charity* also zealously in his death, who for his iniquity reproved his brother and fellow-thief, dying for a like crime to his own."—*St. Gregory.* This thief was the first Christian *saved on the confession of a true faith*, for though others were blessed before him, yet, his soul first entered Paradise, after the Redemption of mankind was completed on the cross. He is an example therefore: 1. Of the suddenness and completeness of justification by faith. It takes but an instant for God to pardon, when He finds a true faith. He pardons instantly and fully. Blessed be His name for this lesson to lift a weary weight of despair from souls burdened by sin and sorrow. 2. He is an example of true, living faith. "Faith without works is dead, being alone," as Saint Gregory has shown from this case and Bp. Bull more largely proved. The thief believed, repented, recanted, rebuked the one that mocked, confessed his faith, showed his humility, and prayed—in all manifesting that *penitence* which contains in it the resolution to lead a new life following the commandments of God. 3. He is an example of the importance of repentance even in a dying man. This example may be abused by the unthinking, and there is need of caution. See note, Matt. xxvii. 44. But after all cautions, it is still an instance of God's infinite mercy, and should be considered as such, with the prudent. It is sad enough to be brought suddenly low, when one's religious work is all to do. Let us not destroy the only plank which a Saviour has thrown out to sustain the trembling faith of such souls, and to give relief to the agony of surviving friends. Let us adore Him who could forget His own sorrows, so far as to snatch this one soul from Satan. ¶ *When Thou comest, &c.* We cannot and need not determine now what idea he had of that coming. It is sufficient that according to his knowledge he believed. He prayed to Christ for safety, as a sinner; and though his ignorance was probably very great, his faith was strong for salvation.

43. *To day.* He asked for some future remembrance. Jesus promises an immediate reward. Before the sun set the souls of both had fled from the pains of Calvary to the regions of the blessed. ¶ *Paradise.* This was none other than that place of present rest and quiet, where the souls of the righteous are now in joy and felicity, and not the future place or state into which souls and bodies are to be finally received in heaven. And this is plain from three considerations. 1. That such is the meaning of the word Paradise. It is taken from the Old Testament, meaning a garden, and has a consistent sense in Scripture. Adam was put in Eden, in preparation for heaven. So Paradise was transferred to the condition of spirits expecting heaven. The Jews believed the departed just to be in such a state, and called it being in Paradise. See 2 Cor. xii. 4; Rev. ii. 7. 2. Jesus Himself did not ascend into heaven

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the ‖earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, [a]Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ [b]And behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor: *and he was* a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them): *he was* of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and pre-

‖ Or, *land*. *a* Ps. 31. 5; 1 Pet. 2. 23. *b* Matt. 27. 57; Mark 15. 42; John 19. 38.

properly so called, until he ascended thither in the risen body. See John xx. 17; 1 Pet. iii. 19. And this we profess every day in the creeds, that He was then in the place of departed spirits. 3. This can be no otherwise, since by heaven, we signify the place where *bodies and souls* are finally to receive their reward for the deeds done in the body. It is a confusion of language not to keep up the distinction between the state of souls while separate from bodies, and the final state of souls and bodies united. The Scripture declares death to be alleviated of its curse to the righteous, but still to hold rule over all until the last trump. And the Church in her prayers teaches us to regard them as truly in joy and felicity, and awaiting their final consummation in bliss with all saints, according to St. Paul. Heb. xi. 39, 40. Into this state of being, namely of a bodiless soul, waiting in hope for the final coming of Christ, this dying penitent entered; a state by the mercy of Christ deserving the name of Paradise, the garden of the Lord. Comp. Luke xvi. 19–31; John xi. 11; Phil. i. 23; Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27, 31.

44–46. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 45–50.

47–49. See Matt. xxvii. 52–55.

50–56. See Matt. xxvii. 57, 61.

51. *Waited for the kingdom of God.* With other pious Jews he was expecting the kingdom of the Messiah, and believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Our Lord did not require all who believed in Him to follow Him, but had many friends in the various parts of Judea, who trusted in Him as their future king. They could not yet be said to have spiritual faith in Him, for such His disciples as

pared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day, [a]according to the commandment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Easter Sunday.

NOW [b]upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, [c]two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye [‖]the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen. [d]Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And [e]they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that*

a Ex. 20. 10. *b* Matt. 28; Mark 16; John 20. *c* John 20. 12; Acts 1. 10. ‖ Or, *Him that liveth?*

d Matt. 16. 21; & 17. 23; Mark 8. 31; & 9. 31; Ch. 9. 22. *e* John 2. 22.

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yet had not. The Church in all its parts awaited the Spirit of truth on Pentecost, to lead them into all truth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1–12. See notes, Matt. xxviii. 1–11.

5. *Why seek ye the living, &c.* Why do ye seek a living man in the place prepared for the dead? The angels announced the birth of Christ, and now wonder at the slowness of the disciples in discovering that which Jesus had told them so often of the certainty of the new birth of the resurrection.

13. *Two of them.* Two of the company of believers, probably of the seventy disciples. In verse 33d they find "the *eleven* gathered together," which shows that they were not of that number. One of them was Cleopas or Alphæus, husband of Mary and father of James, hence the relation of our Lord. John xix. 25; Matt. x. 3. The other is supposed to have been St. Luke himself, but this simply because no clue remains to identify him. ¶ *Emmaus.* There were two places of the name. The other lay in the plain toward Joppa, about three times the distance of this one from Jerusalem, called also Nicopolis, mentioned 1 Maccabees iii. 40. This Emmaus of St. Luke was a village about seven and a half miles north-west from the city, the ruins of which still remain. The Christians at one time built several churches there, one upon the spot claimed by tradition as the site of the house of Cleopas. A few fragments of the walls of this church are still visible. ¶ *Three score furlongs.* Sixty furlongs, or about seven and a half miles. These two disciples, not being, as the twelve, the immediate attendants of our Lord, had gone up to keep the Paschal feast, and were now returning to their homes. They were confused and perplexed at the events of the last few days, and were discussing them in a bewildered state of mind. As the wife of Cleopas was left in the city, it is probable that they meditated a return to Jerusalem.

were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre, and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 ¶ And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* three score furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together*, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a

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15. *Communed together.* They talked to each other concerning the events which had come to pass in the last three days. They reasoned too, putting one thing with another, and were full of perplexity. Their old Jewish notions of a temporal kingdom on the one side was dashed down—the king had been crucified. On the other, little glimpses of a Divine majesty were flashing upon them, in the rumors of the resurrection. ¶ *Jesus Himself drew near.* Having now a *spiritual body* (1 Cor. xv. 44), distance and form are no obstacles to the lively motions of His spirit. Jesus no longer lived with the disciples, nor was holden of our human infirmities, but appeared and vanished at will, being in a risen body, that defies our analysis. How sweetly is here fulfilled the promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. xviii. 20. He comes unexpectedly to strengthen faith and lift the mind to heavenly things. O Lord, let not our eyes be holden by sin and infirmity, that we may not see Thee, but let us know Thee present with us in all our perplexities!

16. *Their eyes were holden.* St. Mark says, "he appeared *in another form* to two of them as they walked and went into the country." Mark xvi. 12. Says Theophylact: "He did not further govern His body by natural laws, but spiritually and supernaturally." It must be noted that this mode of appearance corresponded exactly with their mental condition, answering to that internal perplexity. In mind they loved and doubted. Jesus presents Himself to their bodily eyes, just as He was at the time before their minds, and first clears away the inward mists, before they see Him to be Jesus. God constantly appeared to men in modes which symbolized their wants and situations at the time. Ex. iii. 2; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; Matt. iii. 16.

17. *What manner, &c.* This was a question which any passing stranger might address to them, who noticed their earnest gestures, and the sadness which their conversation had induced upon their visages. But they are so full of the matter, that they are something surprised, as if there could be no other subject of conversation at the time. How often does Christ draw near to us to lighten our sadness, and we, perhaps surprised at the manner in which He does it, are half inclined to be offended.

18. *Art thou only a stranger?* One dwelling in a foreign country. "Art thou so much a stranger as alone to be ignorant of that which now occupies the mind of every Jew and dweller in Judea!" They did not recognize His

stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet [a]mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people;

20 And [b]how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre.

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which

a Acts 7. 22.

b Ch. 23. 1; Acts 13. 27, 28.

countenance. They supposed Him some foreign Jew, who had come to the feast, and wonder at His question. We may judge from this, that the death of the Saviour was a fact universally known, after the darkness and earthquake of the Friday before.

19. *A prophet.* They say not, the Messiah, for their faith in that character had now grown dim, but they freely confess Him to have been as one of the prophets. His power they believed in, but the death on the cross was a fact which they could not comprehend or explain. ¶ *Mighty in deed.* Able to do great and marvellous miracles. He had raised the dead. But, alas, how could He die! ¶ *And word.* In His teaching. ¶ *Before God and all the people.* He was proved to be a true prophet. For He who is so manifested that men must believe, and that God owns Him by showing miracles at His hand, He is a true prophet.

20. See the chapters containing the account.

21. *We trusted.* We hoped, *did* do so, but now, alas, He is dead. That hope is at sea. ¶ *Have redeemed Israel.* That He was the Messiah. This redeeming Israel was not after a spiritual sort, but from the power of the Romans, as is shown in Acts i. 6. But of course this trust was now gone. ¶ *Beside all this.* Beside the fact of His death, He made a promise of returning again the third day: and that is now nearly gone, is fast passing, and we have not seen Him, so that we are sad; for this vision was a bright and glorious one to our Jewish hearts. Cleopas states his feelings just as they are, and the doubtfulness of his mind appears in his words. True, the vision of an earthly reign could not harmonize with the death of the Messiah, but if one ray of spiritual light could have revealed to them the heavenly laws of the Church, they would have seen the real nature of what then disturbed them. ¶ *To-day is the third day.* It is evident that the Apostles supposed that Jesus had lain in the tomb exactly the time which He prophesied beforehand that He would. These disciples reason that the third day is passing, and Jesus did not appear. It was therefore on that day that He would rise, according to their mode of computation.

22, 23. *Certain women.* One of them his own wife. See Matt. xxviii. 1–7; John xx. 12. ¶ *A vision of angels.* An appearance of angels. They did not believe what the women had told them. They could not deny—all was confusion. Mark xvi. 11. It was *very hard* for the natural heart to receive the doctrine or fact of the resurrection.

24. *Certain of them which were with us.* With us, who trusted that this was the Christ. Peter and John are meant

were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 [c]Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at [b]Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them [c]in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto

a v. 46; Acts 17. 3; 1 Pet. 1. 11. *b* Gen. 3. 15; & 22. 18; & 26. 4; & 49. 10; Num. 21. 9; Deut. 18. 15; Heb. 11. 10. *c* Ps. 16. 9, 10; & 22; & 132. 11; Is. 7. 14; & 9. 6; & 40. 10, 11; & 50. 6; & 53; Jer. 23. 5; & 33. 14, 15; & Ezek. 34. 23; 37. 25; Dan. 9. 24; Mic. 7. 20; Mal. 3. 1; & 4. 2.

John xx. 2–9. They had not believed on the testimony of the women of the *absence* of the body, and in turn they were not believed by the eleven. Mark xvi. 13.

25. *O fools.* This word which is once forbidden, or rather under which is forbidden all abusive expressions, in the heat of anger and strife between persons at variance with each other (see Matt. v. 22), was yet often used in such a sense as this, without intending any abuse or disgrace. See 1 Cor. xv. 36. It was a sort of advertisement that one had mistaken a plain fact, or neglected some evidence which would settle *their own doubts*, when perceived. It signifies, O ye who are troubled with this doubt, and sad withal, how foolish, how slow of mind not to see the truth which will settle the doubt, and cheer your sadness. May we be called fools by such as enlighten us, when their "reproofs of instruction are the way of life." Prov. vi. 23; 4 Cor. iv. 10. ¶ *Slow of heart to believe.* They had almost said, as the wicked Pharisees, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Hence He gently rebukes them, that they had been so slow to apprehend the truth. They were slow of *heart*, the dulness was in their want of spiritual affections, for it was their Jewish prejudice which hid the truth. ¶ *All that the Prophets have spoken.* All, not a part only. They believed the prophecies of Messiah's kingdom, but forgot the sufferings; trusted to the reign, but forgot the humiliation. All prophecy, taken together, would have settled the trouble of their minds. All Scripture will keep one from error; while a part of it wrested from its place, makes the sectarian and the bigot.

26. *Ought not Christ, &c.* There was sufficient evidence that the Messiah would die. God had predetermined the plan of Redemption from the beginning. All the details of that plan from the first looked forward to the one result, the Atonement of the Messiah. The *ought* here spoken of lies in the harmony of that plan, which could be consistent only by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

27. *Beginning at Moses.* Beginning His explanation of prophecy, with the writings of Moses, at the very first portion of revelation. Moses was called a prophet. Deut. xviii. 15; Acts iii. 22. And if we ask how or when has he foretold the death of Christ, the reply is easy. Says a certain writer, if one desired to know what was the tenor of the conversation held by our Lord and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the *Epistle to the Hebrews* doth seem to be the best exposition of the subject of that discourse, for that Epistle is taken up with showing the same great truth, how that it was plain from the Old Testament Scripture, that Christ must suffer, and so enter into His glory. See Heb. ii. 14–18; v. viii. 5; x. 1–12. ¶ *All the prophets.* All the rest of the Jewish Scriptures. ¶ *He expounded.* He explained to them, while their eyes were yet holden, this consistent interpretation of their Scripture; so that unawed by His presence, they should discover by evident reasons, the meaning and propriety of His death. They must have known the

the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he ‖ vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to anoth-

‖ Or, *ceased to be seen of them.*

drift of their Scriptures, and rejoiced as they saw their doubts removed. As one sees a landscape in an Autumn morning, when night fogs envelope all things except the tops of hills and spires of Churches, so had they been gazing on single disconnected truths. The Saviour's discourse pours light upon the scene, scatters the mist, and gives unity to the whole. ¶ *The things concerning Himself.* We now see this Divine light in Scripture, and rejoice in it. And we should catch this meaning of the Bible, and find Christ in type and symbol, biography and sacrifice, in order to be safe from the rationalizing spirit of this age.

"From Eden's loss until the end of years,
From East to West the Son of man appears."

Sometimes men smile at the simpleness of the Fathers, who, perhaps, were at times led into error by a too great simpleness, but their spirit was safer and more loving than that which now breathes a malaria upon our Church from the world without. The whole Bible has one design,—"*Christ the end of the Law*—and prophets and Gospel, *for righteousness.*"

28. *He made as though He would have gone further.* He was walking on, as any stranger might do, until they asked Him to remain with them. St. Luke, judging by the result after He was made known to them, speaks as if He was intending to go on. He requires that they constrain Him, before He will remain and bless them yet more entirely.

29. *Constrained Him.* By the gentle pressure of hospitality they urged Him to abide there. The disciples seem to have dwelt there, and there is no reason why we should reject the tradition, that Cleopas lived in this village. ¶ *Abide with us.* This is the mode of their constraint. They are filled with grateful feeling toward Him, as a learned and wise stranger, who had relieved their perplexity and quieted their spirits—and they beg Him to remain, hoping to hear more of His conversation. Hospitality is a sacred duty, and especially towards the members of the household of faith. They who have given their lives up to teach others spiritual things, should be ever kindly received by all who call themselves Christians. Gal. vi. 6, 7; 1 Cor. ix. 11, 13, 14.

30. *Took bread, and blessed it, and brake.* This action revealed Jesus to the disciples, but by what association we do not now know. It is said to have been a sign of the master of a company, to break and distribute bread to His followers, and it is proper to suppose Him, revealing Himself to them by a supernatural removal of the bar which had concealed him, as He broke the bread. Others say that this was a reminder of the Sacramental act, but if so, it was only a reminder, and not a Sacrament—as the essential parts of it are wanting. It is enough that the Saviour discovered Himself, not so much by the action, as by the voluntary change of His spiritual body back into its familiar form.

31. *Their eyes were opened.* The "other form" disappeared, and in the face of the stranger they saw their Lord. Many are inclined to escape the confession of the supernatural in this scene, but in vain. The Evangelists use language consistent only on the supposition, that Jesus was able to vary

er, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, [a]and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 ¶ And [b]as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them,

a 1 Cor. 15. 5.

b Mark 16. 14; John 20. 19; 1 Cor. 15. 5.

His resurrection body at will—and He had withheld Himself from these two, until He had opened the eyes of their understanding, and then suffering them for a moment to see who had been with them, He vanished, to appear to them again in the holy city, about two hours after. ¶ *He vanished out of their sight.* Literally, *He became invisible.* This was by the laws of a spiritual, not a natural body, and this power Jesus showed on more than one occasion. This was done to teach us to meditate on that body, for when He shall appear again, we shall be like Him. 1 John iii. 2; Phil. iii. 21.

32. *Our hearts burn within us.* A natural and beautiful expression of the delight with which they had listened to His confirmation of the truths that were struggling in their hearts for light. The heart beats quicker and warmer for joy, and they had felt the glow of spiritual delight as they listened. How great the joy to all Christians of receiving the glowing truths of eternal salvation, in their hours of meditation, or on hearing the word preached. The bond between preacher and hearer is sacred. St. Paul often dwells on it. 1 Cor. iv. 15; 1 Tim. i. 2. ¶ *He opened to us.* Showed us the deeper and true spiritual meaning of the Scriptures. They had understood the *letter*, not the *spirit* of prophecy, as others of whom St. Paul speaks. 2 Cor. iii. 14–18.

33. *The same hour.* As soon as they recovered from their surprise, they hastened back to the city to communicate their joyful news to the sorrowing disciples. It must have been near sunset, when they reached the city. It would take them nearly two hours to return. ¶ *The eleven.* The name by which the disciples now went since the death of Judas. It is not here used strictly as a number, as Thomas was absent. John xx. 24. ¶ *And them that were with them.* Others of the Christian company, from the number of the seventy disciples, or of the women.

34. *Saying.* The eleven disciples and their companions said this, that Jesus had appeared to Simon during their absence. This fact is mentioned by St. Paul. 1 Cor. xv. 5. The testimony of so grave and reverend a man as Peter could not be gainsayed, and the disciples inform the two believers who returned of their knowledge of the fact. Of course, then, it was not Peter who had gone to Emmaus. The light dawns on them gradually. Peter saw Him first of the eleven. These two are thus gently taught till their minds receive the truth of the resurrection. Then the minds of all are in a state to receive this truth, and Jesus comes to them.

36, 37. *Jesus stood in the midst.* See John xx. 19. The doors were fastened. He did not come or draw near, but was first seen standing in their midst, after a wonderful and miraculous manner. These circumstances terrify them, as men are always terrified at the presence

Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

43 And he [a]took *it*, and did eat before them.

44 And he said unto them,

a Acts 10. 41.

of spirits. Job. iv. 13–15. Jesus proved by this that He was a *spirit*, and then by other proofs that He was also a *body*. The two facts combine in a *spiritual body*, a mystery which can be fully comprehended only in another life. ¶ *Peace be to you.* A form of salutation from spiritual beings to frightened mortals. Judges vi. 23; Dan. x. 19. It was requisite that their minds should be first calmed, before they could understand His teaching, and witness to His resurrection. And it is now of great value to us that they had the power of forming a correct judgment of the fact. St. Paul says, that the resurrection is a key-stone of the Gospel doctrines, and of vital importance. 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15.

39. *Behold My hands and My feet.* These had been pierced by the nails on the cross, and presented positive proof of His identity. St. Thomas the prudent fixed upon this very fact as the only evidence which could certify to him the body of Jesus. Added to the wound in the side, it shows that all doubt, after such proofs, is not in the mind or reason, but in the perverse will. ¶ *Handle me.* "Put your hands upon Me, and see that though I have come into your midst, and will again vanish from your sight, yet that I am not a mere phantom, but with that incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual body, which is heavenly, and to live for ever at God's right hand." ¶ *For a spirit, &c.* A spirit or a phantom has a mere shadowy appearance, which has, perhaps, no greater solidity than the excited image of the mind, becoming visible by a natural delusion of the eye. The ghost, i. e., geist, or gast, or spirit of man is bodiless and invisible. The Saviour was not such. Hence such bodiless spirits cannot yet be like Him, nor follow Him whither He has ascended.

41. *Believed not for joy.* The news was too great and wonderful to be received at once. They trembled with pleasure at believing it. How gloriously did the vision of their temporal kingdom, which had been so previously dashed, return upon them. St. Mark says that some even now did not fully believe (Mark xvi. 13), and that Jesus rebuked them for their hardness of heart. ¶ *Any meat.* Any food at all. Meat, in old English, means simply food.

42. *Honeycomb.* Honey was formerly very plenty in Palestine, which was called the land flowing with honey. John the Baptist fed on wild honey. It was so abundant as to be the food of the poor. This, with the fish, was the fare provided by the disciples for their own use.

43. *Did eat before them.* Not from necessity of food, for the future body of saints will have no such wants as now, but from power to show the real nature of the body then among them.

44. *These are the words.* Or, these are the *things* of which I forewarned you. It was this resurrection after three days that I taught to you, and you did not understand. This foreknowledge was another proof to them of the fact. ¶ *While I was yet with you.* In the mortal body. He is not with them longer, being separated by the resurrection. ¶ *Law of Moses.* The Jews divided their Scriptures into three great

These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened [c]he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, [b]Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and [c]remission of sins should be preached in his name [d]among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

a Acts 16. 14. *b* v. 26; Ps. 22; Is. 50. 6; & 53. 2, &c.; Acts 17. 3. *c* Dan. 9. 24; Acts 13. 38, 46; 1 John 2. 12. *d* Gen. 12. 3; Ps. 22. 27; Is. 49. 6, 22; Jer. 31. 34; Hos. 2. 23; Mic. 4. 2; Mal. 1. 11.

parts. The first they called the Law, or the Law of Moses, i. e., given by Moses, which they especially reverenced. The Prophets formed the second portion, embracing the former and latter prophetic writings. The former were the historical books written by prophets, namely, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. The latter prophets were the three greater, Daniel being transferred to the third division, and the twelve minor prophets. The third division began with the Psalms, and were spoken of under this title for convenience. It contained the remainder of the Old Testament, and was sometimes termed Hagiographa, or holy writings. The Jews reverenced these as of a lower class than the Prophets, and both of them as a step beneath the Law. And here our Lord speaks of all, thereby teaching us, that the doctrines of His death and resurrection are predicted in the whole of the ancient Scriptures. St. Paul, in the same way, declares the old Covenant to be a porch to the new. "For the law made nothing perfect, but was the bringing in (or entrance way) to a better hope, by which we draw nigh unto God." Heb. vii. 19, and x. 1. The doctrines are of the Christian Covenant, therefore, infused through all, as well as through single parts. They are not revealed in the fulness, but under veils and symbols.

45. *Opened He their understanding.* By the aid of His Spirit He made them understand the Scriptures on this point of the death and resurrection of the Messiah.

46. *Thus it behooved.* After this manner. It was according to the harmony of the Divine plan, that Christ should die and rise again. God in His wisdom had seen it necessary for His own highest glory, and had so arranged the sacred plan from the beginning.

47. *Repentance and remission of sins.* Repentance is such a sorrow for sin as is required by the Gospel, and here implies all the acts of mind and spirit on *man's side* of the Covenant, which are made necessary to salvation by the Gospel. These acts are, sorrow for sin, full purpose to forsake it, desire for pardon, and resolution to obey the Gospel, faith in the Bible, and chiefly in this teaching of it, that God will save in Christ all who enter into and keep His Covenant: love, an earnest desire after spiritual things, peace with all, purity of heart, and entire holiness. Repentance may not have these parts in view at first, but must, in its first part and act, consist in a solid resolution to confess and forsake sin for the obedience of the Gospel. The others follow. *Remission of sins* is God's part of the covenant, based on repentance, certified in baptism, and conferring on the sinner justification, regeneration, and the graces of the Spirit according to his necessity and in the degree of his faithfulness. And these two parts of the Covenant make up the everlasting Gospel, which all are to utter and preach from nation to nation, till the world's end. ¶ *Beginning at Jerusalem.* "To the Jew first." Rom. i. 16. It was necessary for the disciples to make the offer of grace to

48 And ye [a] are witnesses of these things.

49 ¶ And [b] behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

a Acts 1. 8, 22; & 2. 32; & 3. 15. *b* Is. 44. 3; Joel 2. 28; Acts 2.

50 ¶ And he led them out as far as [c] to Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he [d] was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

c Acts 1. 12. *d* 2 Kings 2. 11; Acts 1. 9; Eph. 4. 8.

the Jews first, since they were already in covenant with God by the law; but after a time it was to be carried to all nations. See Acts xiii. 46. God then caused Jerusalem to be destroyed, that the Gospel should be made free to all.

48. *Are witnesses of these things.* They had seen Him from the beginning, "all the time that He went in and out among them." Acts i. 21. They were to go forth and collect the Church, testify to all men the things which they had seen and known, commit the same to faithful men, record it in gospels, epistles, and church government and ordinances; and so incorporate their witness by the grace of God, that the Church should be made the pillar and ground of this truth, as she is at this day, in her total being, that is, embracing all that is past in her history and all present believers.

49. *The promise of My Father.* The thing which had been promised, which was the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, which promise He had revealed to them. John xiii. 16, 17, 26. This was to be given on that grand era and epocha of the Church, inferior in import to no other, the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Acts ii; Joel. ii. 28, 29; Heb. viii. 8–12. ¶ *With power from on high.* Inspiration to see and know all Christian truth, miracles to confirm it on occasion, and unction to preach it to the hearts and consciences of men. The supernatural excess of the gift has ceased, but the gift of the Holy Ghost is still a part of the true ministry of the word of grace, See the last collects of Office of Institution in Prayer Book.

50, 51. *To Bethany.* See Mark xvi. 19. It was on the eastern declivity of the Mount of Olives. There He had recalled Lazarus to life, and there on the east of the Temple hill, the prophet of old had seen Him coming. Zech. xiv. 4. A Church now marks the spot, which tradition has hallowed as the last which bore up the form of Christ. And a sacred feeling has made it customary in all Christendom to bury the dead, in such a position, as to indicate the faith of His coming. Matt. xxiv. 27. ¶ *While He blessed them.* In the act of blessing, as He finished, His body was borne up by its own energy and glory to its native home in heaven—the first risen man, who entered the everlasting gates.

52. *They worshipped Him.* At this mark of His awful and supernatural nature they worshipped Him, as more than man. They did not yet comprehend the height and length and depth of the love or nature of Christ. But awed by seeing him depart to the heaven above, they paid him involuntarily Divine homage—even as Thomas called Him "My Lord and my God," at the discovery of His identity. If this worship was given Him and approved by their final judgment, as it was, then is He Divine, God and man.

53. *Were continually in the temple.* They had no scruples at a liturgy, but frequented the temple even to the last. St. Luke implies in these words, that their devotion was so enkindled, and their faith in this coming of the Comforter was so bright, that they were constantly engaged in the sacred rites of their religion. And pious Jews as they still were, it became them to worship God in the temple where their Master had so often led them. St. Luke has omitted many of the events of the days preceding the Ascension of Jesus, and concludes his account with

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53 And were continually [a]in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

a Acts 2. 46; & 5. 42.

these few words, perhaps having even then in mind to write the history of the Apostles, as he afterwards did. Says the venerable Bede: "Luke has undertaken to explain more fully than the rest the Priesthood of Christ, and his Gospel, which he commenced with the ministry of the temple in the priesthood of Zacharias. He has finished with the devotion in the temple. And he has placed the Apostles there, about to be ministers of a new priesthood, not in the blood of sacrifices, but in the praises of God, and in blessing, that in the place of prayer and amidst the praises of their devotion, they might wait with prepared hearts for the promise of the Spirit."

"Almighty God, who through Thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life, we humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God world without end. Amen."

"Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to have ascended into the heavens: so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. Amen."

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

St. John, the son of Zebedee—a fisherman nursed in the rude labors of the Sea of Galilee—a disciple beloved before the others, surnamed Boanerges for his impetuous and lofty nature; an Apostle to the Churches until his companions had one by one dropped into the grave; a Prophet, gifted by inspiration to tell of the sublimer mysteries and destinies of the Gospel; a Patriarch at last, and most venerable Evangelist, presents a character and history upon which every Christian may fruitfully ponder, and furnished graces of holiness which all must strive to imitate. He was probably the youngest of the small company which followed Jesus, and received on that account marks of tenderness, which seem to have never excited the animadversion of his elders. In this Gospel, written in his advanced age, he refers to this position of his youth, calling himself the "disciple whom Jesus loved"—as if that tender age had allowed—nay, called for such marks of gentle care in the Master of the little band.

St. John is usually designated as "the brother of James," with whom he was called to be a disciple. Matt. iv. 21. The brothers were surnamed Boanerges —sons of thunder—a title expressive of their characters. Mk. iii. 17. They were joined with St. Peter in certain important scenes; Matt. xvii. 1, 2; and xxvi. 36, 37; Mk. v. 37, ix. 2; Lu. ix. 28. St. John and Peter were appointed to make ready the last Passover; Mk. xiv. 13, at which the former is represented as leaning upon the bosom of Jesus. He alone of the disciples was present at the crucifixion, and received the solemn charge of the Virgin mother from Jesus. John xix. 26, 27. He gave testimony to the issue of water and blood from the side of the dying Lamb of God, was among the last at the grave, and the first to behold the evidences of the Resurrection of Christ. He was honored with the rest by seeing the risen Lord, and found it necessary to contradict a rumor, founded on His words to him, that he would live until the final coming of Christ. John xxi. 22, 23. He was afterwards twice imprisoned by the Sanhedrim. Acts iv. v. He visited Samaria with St. Peter, to impart the Holy Ghost. Acts viii. 14, 15. In the book of Revelation, we are informed that he was at one time banished to Patmos. Rev. i. 9. This was done, as history informs us, by the Roman Emperor Domitian, who was offended by the success of his Apostolic labors in planting Churches in the principal cities of Asia Minor. In the reign of the Emperor Nerva, he returned to Ephesus, and there died at a great age, A. D. 100, baptized with His Master's baptism (Mark x. 39), not by a martyr's death as was his brother St. James (Acts xii. 2), but by the companionship of tribulation for the Church. Rev. i. 9.

St. John published his Gospel in Asia, after seeing the other three, to com-

plete and confirm their accounts, probably A. D. 97. Hence we find many explanations of customs and rites of the Jews, since he was aware that many of his readers were Gentile converts, living at a distance from Jerusalem, and ignorant of the national peculiarities. Jerusalem had been in ruins, and the nation scattered at the time of his writing, thirty years.

Irenæus and others inform us that the design of this Gospel was to refute the errors of the licentious Ebionites and other heretics. He wrote at the request of the Christians of Asia, what Clement of Alexandria has called "a spiritual Gospel," that is, containing more of doctrine, and less of narrative than the others. He omits the events recorded in the other Gospels, or introduces them only as introducing the discourses of our Lord. His accounts are confined mostly to the first years of the ministry of Jesus. His style is simple, unaffected, and free from the artificial ornaments of the rhetorical rules of his age. It is invaluable in this respect, as it is thereby rendered a more luminous vehicle of the character of Him whom he sought to reveal. Writing against the heresies of the age immediately following the Life of Christ, he has declared in terms beyond mistake the Divinity of our Lord, and the procession of the Holy Ghost, to lead the Church into all truth, till the end of time. Conscious that he was concluding the testimony of the first witnesses—the Apostles—he leaves nothing to be desired by us who follow. Though there could have been no end to the volumes which might have been written upon this sacred theme, we are assured that these we have are sufficent to a saving faith, and that no truth necessary to our holiness here or our salvation hereafter has been omitted. John xx. 31. No worthier pen could be desired to complete the Canon, than his who had leaned upon the Master's bosom, and enjoyed His special confidence, and had also been gifted to behold in inspired visions the future wants and conquests of the Church. If "days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom," we may bow with reverence before the man whose whole life, we may say, had been passed in the faith, hopes, trials, conquests and joys of the golden age of early Christianity. And the radiance which lights up this Gospel, and flows out as the sum of the wisdom and experience of the aged Apostle, seems to centre in the word *Love*. "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."

In the system of emblems by which the Fathers symbolized the Evangelists, the Eagle was appropriated to St. John. His feast occurs December 27th, and the Collect for it expresses that the doctrine which he gave is, like the Urim and Thummim of the ancient High Priest, the light of divine truth for the guidance of believers under the New Covenant.

"Merciful Lord, we beseech Thee to cast Thy bright beams of light upon Thy Church, that it being instructed by the doctrine of Thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist St. John, may so walk in the light of Thy truth, that it may at length attain to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER I

IN the beginning was the [a]Word, and the [b]Word was [c]with God, and the Word was [d]God.

a Prov. 8. 22. 23, &c.; Col. 1. 17; 1 John 1. 1; Rev. 1. 2. *b* Prov. 8. 30; Ch. 17. 5.

CHAPTER I.

1. *In the beginning.* At the beginning of time or the earliest creation. Before creation lay eternity, which is immeasurable. St. John begins in the style of Moses, Gen. i. 1. Moses declared that at first beginning God created the heavens and the earth; St. John, that at that same beginning God the Word or Son was existing in that past eternity. The Jews by such expressions signified eternity. Thus, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord?" literally from the beginning. Prov. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." So see Micah v. 2. This beginning was before the incarnation of Christ, which is mentioned afterward (in v. 14), and is fixed (v. 3), when "all things were made by Him." Hence the Word is that Divine Being, whom we worship as Creator, who has revealed to us by creation, and by His dwelling with us in the flesh, the will of God the Father. This second Person of the Trinity was the Creator (Heb. i.), was existing from eternity, and was in the beginning of all things. Col. i. 15, 16. ¶ *Was the Word.* The Greek is *Logos.* It signifies rather more than the English, meaning not only the audible spoken

2 The same was in the [c]beginning with God.

3 All things were [f]made by him; and without him was not

c Phil. 2. 6. *d* 1 John 5. 7. *e* Gen. 1. 1. Col. 1. 16; Heb. 1. 2; Rev. 4. 11.

word, but at the same time the intention and idea of the mind with which it is spoken; the mental word rather than the sound of the voice. There was a Being existing who bore the close relation to God which we can appreciate by thinking on that intimate connection which exists between our minds and the ideas which arise in them and give birth to words. This Being was His Word, by whom He created all things (see Gen. ch. i.), and without whom there was nothing done. But when we learn that this Person was God, and was equal with Him, and that Himself created and afterwards became flesh to redeem all things, then we receive the formal doctrine which is here taught. But of course we cannot grasp it with our limited intellects, nor know God's inscrutable nature to perfection. We believe the *plain*, unmistakable assertions of Scripture, and worship when we cannot pretend to understand. And the part of wisdom in Christians is to ask, What has God by His Spirit taught in Scripture? That we believe. What has He by His providence permitted the great Christian body to hold—for we know that He will not suffer that body to fall into error on such vital points. Matt. xvi. 18; 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

"*God was manifest in the flesh*," was a part of that mystery of godliness which the Church was ordained to teach as the means of human salvation. The doctrines received among us as Scriptural on this matter, are: 1. That Jesus Christ was the Word or Son of God the Father, "begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, and took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin."—*Article II.* 2. That Jesus our Lord was the *only begotten Son*, "begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom (i. e. by the Son) all things were made."—*Nicene Creed.* 3. That God is one God, one Lord: *not one only Person, but three Persons in one substance;* for that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the *same we believe of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality.*"—*Proper preface to Trinity Sunday in Com. Service.* 4. This faith is the gift of God. We thank God "that He has given His servants grace by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine majesty, to worship the Unity."—*Collect for Trinity Sunday.* "That this Word or only begotten Son of God took our nature upon Him, and was born of a pure virgin." That this Incarnate Saviour redeems us and all mankind.—*Catechism.* That He now dwells at the right hand of God, and is to be worshipped by us, and will at last come to be our Judge.—*Te Deum.* This is the faith once delivered to and always held by the saints. Now St. John uses a word here, the Logos, which is strange to our ears. We must search into its history, to learn why he chose to use it, instead of the more familiar word *Son*. There were two classes of hearers to be addressed by him, Jews and Gentiles. The Jews would admit and understand the word Logos, in this sense, because they knew from their own Scriptures that God created all things by His word. The Jewish interpretors, called by us the Chaldee Paraphrasts, had accustomed that people to this idea. The Jews, therefore, understood their Messiah to be meant by many passages of Scripture in which God is mentioned; and that He was a Divine Person — the *Mimra*, i. e., the *Word*, or Revealer of God's nature and will. The learned Gentiles, after Plato, had adopted similar language in their speculations. The *Nous*, or Mind, in the First Cause of all things they put down as the Logos of the First Person of the Godhead, by which that First Cause acted, created, and revealed itself. Both Jews and Gentiles fell into great errors in their theories. St. John therefore takes their favorite word Logos, and shows both parties that Jesus Christ was the everlasting Son of the Father, after whom they were ignorantly groping. Other inspired writers use the word Logos in this same sense. Luke i. 2; Acts xx. 32; Heb. iv. 12; 1 John i. 1; Rev. xix. 13. ¶ *Was with God.* He was therefore, in a sense, distinct, as it would be a tame and foolish thing to say that God was *with Himself*. He was with God as a Person of the Divine substance, and was present, intimate, and beloved by Him, as one receiving and revealing all the intentions of His wisdom. This could be true of no creature; for at that time there was no creature in existence. Thus our Lord speaks of the "Glory which I had with Thee before the world began." John xvii. 5. Solomon is thought to teach the same truth in his description of the Divine wisdom. Prov. viii. 22–31. See Phil. ii. 6, 7. St. Paul calls the Son "the brightness of the glory and the express image of the Person" of God. Heb. i. 3. See John i. 18. ¶ *Was God.* No language can be clearer than this. This Word, who was in the beginning, *was with God*, and therefore a distinct Person, yet *was God*—and therefore was not created. So that the unbeliever can find no other way to escape this plain truth, but either to deny the authenticity of this passage, and to feign that it has been forged and foisted on the Church (a most unfortunate boldness), or else to put greater burden on the

any thing made that was made.
4 In him was [a]life; and the life was the light of men.

[a] 1 John 5. 11.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

sense of mankind, by his explanations to force it from its meaning, than is required of us to believe it as it stands. The Son was with God, therefore distinct in person; was God, therefore one with Him in substance. "Thou art the King of Glory, oh Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father."—*Te Deum.*

2. *The same.* That is, this Word or Son of God. ¶ *Was in the beginning with God.* This is not a useless repetition, but 1. Enforces the great truth expressed already; a truth which is properly held out in advance by the writer, for upon the proofs of it he discourses in his whole account of the life of Christ. He gives us here the key-note of his Gospel. He is about to write, not of a man merely, but "God manifest in the flesh." 2. He seals what has been said by this repetition, and declares that this union with God was from eternity. Heretics might have insinuated some false doctrine, from the order of the sentences, but the Apostle excludes all such fictions, when, returning on his steps, he binds up all in a circle, and makes that true of the Logos at the end which he had asserted at the beginning.

3. *All things.* All things in heaven and earth, terrestrial and celestial, visible and invisible, men, worlds, and angels. Moses had spoken of the material creation; St. John speaks of the spiritual as well. See Col. i. 15, 16; Heb. i. 2. ¶ *Were made by Him.* Or came into existence through Him, as their source. This signifies something more than the common notion of *making*, for in that the maker is supposed to find matter to his hand; but here, the material of all things is first created from His own wonderful power, out of nothing, and then is formed into beings and worlds. ¶ *By Him.* By the Word. In Gen. i. it is said that God created the worlds by a Word. This Word is here said to have been something more than a mere energetic command, to have been a Being and an efficient Agent. Then the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters to give to creation vitality, and God is represented holding council in certain parts of His work. In the New Testament, the Son is declared to be the Creator, who actually put into operation the commands of the Father. Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2, 10. It follows then, that the Creator, the Son, is revealed in His Divine Nature, in both Testaments, that He who talked with the Patriarchs, and appeared at divers times, was the Son of God. Thus the Scripture is consistent in its declaration, "that no man hath seen God, but that the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." v. 18. He declared Him: 1. By Creation, in His omnipotence and omniscient wisdom, as architect and maker of this goodly frame, the world. 2. By His Providence in the history of man under the ancient dispensations. 3. By Redemption—the spiritual creation, whose crowning glory St. John is about to describe. See Rev. iv. 11. He then who has done all this is truly God. ¶ *Without Him.* Without His act and help. The writer has asserted this affirmatively, and now changes the form of his assertion in order to shut out all doubt. There was nothing done in the past but He did it, nothing made or done in creation, providence or grace, but He effected it, and consented to it. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John v. 17. Now as there was nothing made which was not made by the Son, then He Himself was unmade, and was not a creature; therefore He was Creator or God. See Heb. ii. 6–8; 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

4. *In Him was life.* Not simply a vital principle by which He existed, but a life which was to be imparted to the creation which He made. 1 Cor. xv.

6 ¶ There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

45. It is supposed that St. John was using terms which were familiar to his readers, in order to confute the errors of certain heretics called Gnostic, from their pretence of Divine knowledge, who sought to corrupt the early Church. He declares that in the Son of God lay the origin of *life* in its *abstract, substantive sense.* He not only created all things, but also breathed into them the breath of life, and was the origin of all the energies, existences and powers of created beings. For in him all things "live, move, and have their being," whether in earth or heaven. But he means here especially, that there was in the Son, the life which was the light of men, or that Divine principle, the Holy Spirit, which creates men by regeneration after the divine image, which awakens them to a new life, and reveals to them those spiritual relations, that unite them with God. This word *life* is very frequent in all the writings of St. John, and describes with great propriety this *inward work of the Holy Spirit.* It is ascribed to faith and love. Chs. iii. 36; vi. 47; 1 John iii. 14. It is an attribute of the Divine Persons, Father and Son. Ch. v. 26. It is the work of the Spirit in men. Ch. vi. 63; Rom. viii. 2. ¶ *Was the light of men.* Intellectual, moral, or spiritual light, illuminating the soul. He was the source of spiritual light, which is knowledge in its best sense. Sinful and unregenerate men are in darkness. They do not see God, nor receive the spiritual instruction which they need to secure their peace and salvation. Nor can mere intellectual knowledge suffice them. For men may know God, and yet not glorify Him as God, and so be given over to a reprobate mind. But the Son of God causes the light of the Gospel to shine in our hearts by the Spirit, when we rightly use and increase our knowledge of Him, and by faith, repentance, and prayer, seek Him in the ways which He hath taught us. Then is He truly the light of the soul, leading it in divine things, and leading it on to the full knowledge and enjoyment of God's mercies. The most glorious object of the visible creation is the Sun—"the greater light to rule the day." Gen. i. 16. It was a happy art in the writer to fix on the pure word Light to represent, as he so often does, the Sun of Righteousness, that brings healing in its beams to a world darkened and desolated by sin.

5. *The light shineth in darkness.* The Gospel expresses by the word *darkness* the state of all men who are without the knowledge and practice of the Divine will. They are ignorant, hostile to good, and guilty of many sins. As light is opposed to darkness, so the Gospel is the opposite of this spiritual ignorance and depravity. So Jesus came into a wicked world to make known the truth, wisdom, and mercy of God, and spent His life among men, without their understanding or receiving Him, exactly as if light had come into the darkness of a cave or sepulchre, which could perversely close it in and forbid it to shine. Light shines in vain upon men dead or asleep. Even as St. Paul hath it: "But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: *for whatsoever doth make manifest* is light. Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 13, 14. ¶ *Comprehended it not.* Did not receive it, understand, or profit by it. Christ came into a sinful world, which did not believe in and hail Him, but perverted by sin and ignorance, denied and rejected Him. The same thing is true of all sinners and skeptics now, who disbelieve or disobey the Gospel. The light shines around them, but they are wilfully blind to its shining. Our Lord spake after this same manner to the Pharisees. Ch. ix. 39–41.

6. *A man sent from God.* John the Baptist. See note, Matt. iii. 1. Many of the men of St. John's age were inclined to honor John as the Messiah, and to avoid the persecutions, which arose against the Church, by dropping the name of Christians, and pretending to be followers of John. Here the writer

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

9 *That* was the true [a]Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

a Is. 49. 6; 1 John 2. 8.

condemns that error, and shows him to have been a true prophet, but no more. He was sent from God only as a messenger, to prepare the way for Christ, to bear witness to Him, and to point out the light to those who were blinded with their prejudices. John was a true prophet, was commissioned from heaven, and endowed with gifts and graces, such as no prophet had before received; but he was only the servant and forerunner of Christ, despatched in advance to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

7, 8. *Came for a witness.* This was his special, peculiar mission and office, to prepare men for Christ, as the prophets had foretold, and to give testimony to this person at His appearance. This he did by his preaching, the burden of which was, "The kingdom of God (i. e., Messiah's kingdom) is at hand." Matt. iii. 2. And again, in a wonderful manner the earthly witness was confirmed by supernatural signs, at the baptism of the Saviour. Matt. iii. 16; see ver. 32. ¶ *That all men.* That is, all who heard him. Such general phrases must often be limited by the circumstances of the case. The design of John's preaching was, that all the Jews who came to him should have every proper argument to prepare them for, and to convince them of, the coming of the Messiah. The Gentiles were not included in the number. But as he began that testimony which is since confirmed and carried on by others in the Christian Church to all the nations of men, so may it be said that his office was to give such witness to the truth, as should incline all men who hear it, to believe. ¶ *Might believe.* The one proposition which he was sent to establish beyond controversy was this, that the Messiah was then on the earth, and that Jesus, the Son of Mary, was the Messiah. The *believing* here spoken of, refers to the credit given by men to that fact. But as no intelligent reader of this narrative could receive that fact concerning Jesus, without receiving all that followed from it, so this belief would extend itself through all the truths, precepts, and promises of the Gospel, as they were then understood. ¶ *Was not that Light.* He was not the Messiah. John was "a burning and a shining light," that is, an inspired, zealous, and eloquent instructor, sent from God to give knowledge of the truth, but was not *the* light, the one source and fountain of all light in spiritual things. Thus Christ is not only distinguished from, but is opposed to, all prophets. The greatest of them cannot receive this title, but only shines with borrowed light. John and the prophets receive all their honor from their relation to that Saviour, and their clearness and fidelity in foretelling His approach, and preparing men for it.

9. *That was the true Light.* John was not, but Christ was this true Light—this Maker and Benefactor of all. This word *true* in the Gospel, often signifies opposition, not so much to false, as to imperfect earthly things, and is equivalent to spiritual. Thus St. John, 1 Epis. ii. 8: "The darkness (of mankind) is past, and the true (celestial) light—the light of the Gospel—now shineth." See ch. vi. 32; Heb. viii. 2. The light which shines to our bodily eyes is created and transitory, and must soon fail (2 Pet. iii. 7), but this *true Light*, which illuminates the soul, is pure, spiritual and eternal. Rev. xxi. 23. ¶ *That lighteth.* That instructs in the will of God, and regenerates the souls of all believers. ¶ *Every man.* Whoever would receive it. Moses had been a beacon and instructor to one race only, the Jews. But now the spiritual light of the Gospel was to shine out upon all

10 [a]He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

[a] Heb. 1. 2; & 11. 3.

nations and kindreds of men. At the time St. John was writing, the Gospel had been spread abroad among the nations. ¶ *That cometh into the world.* This phrase is ambiguous in the Greek, and is translated, 1. Of every man who cometh into the world, as our translators have given it. And this is true. For we must, of course, limit the assertion to its *possible* meaning; and St. John may well say that it enlighteneth every man who is born, that will receive it and believe; or every man to whom it comes. Or in a wider sense, we may extend it to all mankind. St. Paul teaches (Acts xiv. 17), that God has "not left Himself *without witness*," in all nations, but has given all men such blessings, and appointed such laws for them, that "they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him (Acts xvii. 27); and again, that God has placed in all men every where, an *inward monitor*, and natural reason, so that "the invisible things of Him, His eternal Power and Godhead, are *clearly seen* by all men," and so they, in some weaker sense, "knew God," and His wrath against all unrighteousness (Rom. i. 17, 19; and ii. 14, 15): therefore this light which was manifest in all men that are born, and is still visible in every land, however heathen and ignorant it may have become, did and does come from the Son of God, from that One, who is the Word of God, to create the moral sense and the Light of Light, to illumine the souls of every son of Adam. Or 2. This phrase *which cometh into the world*, may very properly, as the Fathers would have it, be joined to the word Light. This is the Light which cometh into the world and illumines every man. For it may be urged that this phrase, *which cometh*, &c., does not seem to have been usual with the sacred writers, to express any and every man's coming into life, i. e., *his birth*, but rather confined by them to the advent of some great Person or dispensation. So ch. iii. 19. "This is the condemnation, that *light* is come into the world," &c. See ch. xii. 46; ch. vi. 14. "This is of a truth *that Prophet* that should come into the world." See ch. xviii. 37, which is important. Jesus there says of Himself: "To this end *I was born*, and for this cause *came I into the world*, that I should bear witness unto the truth." In this passage the birth is distinguished from the coming. The one was natural of a woman, the other was the volition of a Being existing before the Incarnation. The meaning of the phrase in the present case is not greatly altered, as far as it regards the light reaching all men, except that it is not asserted of all men as naturally born, but only as spiritually born again of the Holy Ghost. The Light coming into the world does specially illuminate all such regenerate souls with its beams, and fully reveals to them the way of life. The other reading is perfectly safe, for Christ is the source of all the spiritual knowledge and vitality which the race of Adam has ever received. Acts iv. 12.

10. *He was in the world.* This may refer to His *pre-existence.* The Son of God was in the world in all the dispensations of grace, in the ages of the patriarchs, judges, and prophets. And this constant presence, which is too often neglected by readers of the Bible, may be easily discovered by a diligent study of the Old Testament. But it seems more probable that St. John was speaking of the period of the Incarnation, that Emmanuel (God with us) was seen among men and dwelt awhile on the earth in a human form. ¶ *The world was made by Him.* By the Son of God. Col. i. 16–18. The Creator of the world was confessed by Jews and Gentiles to have been the Almighty and Supreme God. St. John repeats what he had said in ver. 3, that he might stifle the pestilent errors of his day. It is not necessary for us to recall them. But every turn of his sentences in this chapter is emphatic, and

11 He came unto his own,[a] and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them[b] gave he ‖power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

a Acts 13. 46. *b* 2 Pet. 1. 4; 1 John 3. 1.

‖ Or, *the right, or privilege.*

was carefully studied by the early Christians, to refute their wild and fanciful opponents. The first great system of heresies which arose against the Church taught that there were *two creative principles*, a good and a bad; that the bad principle had made the world and made it evil; that the bad was the God of Moses, while Christ was sent by the Good Being to destroy the bad. St. John now confounds this vagary by declaring that Christ was the Creator of this world, though sin has defaced it; and thus he prepares the way to his next assertion, that this same Creator was *incarnate*, to redeem the world from sin. ¶ *The world knew Him not.* The *world* here means the men of the world, as in 1 Pet. ii. 5. Those whom He had created, being blinded by sin and ignorance, did not recognize their Creator and Redeemer. They knew Him not, that is, to any good purpose. They did not receive Him gladly, obey Him, and rejoice in His instructions.

11. *He came unto His own.* To His own covenanted people or Church. They were His possession, the Israel whom He had been leading for ages. From this phrase results another argument for the divinity of Christ. If the Israelitish people were His, then was He Jehovah, their Lord and Ruler. For the Israelites were the chosen people of the Lord Jehovah, as is repeatedly declared in the Old Testament. See Ps. xxxiii. 12; Ex. xx. 5, &c. Therefore we may find the revelation of Christ in His Divine nature in the Old Testament as well as in the New. He was the Jehovah which appeared to Abraham (Gen. xviii.), to Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 24–30), to Moses (Ex. iii.), and others. We may well humble ourselves as a race that we are so unready to recognize and obey this glorious Saviour. As the Jews rejected Him and died in their sins, so must we perish, if we despise so great salvation as is offered to us in Christ.

12. *But as many as received Him.* All true believers who received and obeyed Him. Many, of all classes of the Jews, did so during His life; many others, of all nations, had done so when this was written. And though His light was refused by the masses, and so was inefficient with them, yet the power of it was proved in all those individuals who did receive it into their hearts. ¶ *Gave He power.* Or privilege. It is both privilege and power; privilege, that He permits it, power, that He aids it by His Spirit. ¶ *Sons of God.* By spiritual birth. Christians are so called because they are adopted into His family, are made partakers of the Holy Spirit, brethren with Christ, and heirs of grace. Thus the Catechism drawn from many Scriptural texts, declares: "I was made (in baptism) a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Christ did not compel men to this by irresistible might, but gave them power, and sweetly drew them by His grace. ¶ *On His name.* Or, *on Him.* Name is thus used for a person. Ch. ii. 23. It signifies, not merely belief in a name, but a hearty credit to all which that name indicates, an assent to the Gospel, trust in the power, hope in the grace, and obedience to the whole dispensation of Christ. See Matt. xii. 21; Acts iii. 16. All those who thus believe are justified, regenerated and adopted by God as His own people and children. They are to be saved, not for their own merits, which could never have obtained this gift for them, but as holy and true *members of that "family* for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now liveth and reigneth" in heaven, By true and living faith in Christ as our Saviour, we receive this privilege.

13. *Which were born.* To be born in the natural way is, to begin to breathe

13 [a]Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

a Jas. 1. 18; 1 Pet. 1. 23; Ch. 3. 5.

air and see the light of heaven, and thus to begin to live. And here it is used of the second or spiritual birth of the soul of the sinner, into the kingdom of God. This spiritual new birth, often called by us *regeneration*, from two Latin words, meaning to *be born again*, is one of the facts and doctrines more plainly taught in the New Testament. Our Lord describes it (ch. iii.) to Nicodemus, as being necessary to all men, and effected by "water and the Spirit." See Titus iii. 5. Here St. John declares by negatives that this spiritual change was not due to the choice of parents, nor of men in any sense, but was the gift of God. ¶ *Not of blood.* Not a natural birth, as when an infant is born. There is no law which makes the child of pious parents necessarily pious, but in the kingdom of grace each soul must choose or reject for itself, the obedience of the Gospel. The parents may bring their child to baptism, and there receive in its name the conditional promises of Divine grace, and seal, in its behalf, the covenant of Christ; which act, if the child remains faithful, after it grows up to years of discretion, will prove its regeneration. "Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is *to follow Christ* (in our own choice), and to be made like Him, that as He died and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living."—*Office of Baptism.* Now the child, as all others, must remain in this covenant by its own choice; *continually* doing this, in order to be saved. The Jews supposed that all the descendants of Abraham were entitled to the privileges of the kingdom of the Messiah. This St. John denies. And by some it is suggested that the Apostle refers to the bloody rite of circumcision, as if he would say, "Men are born into Christ's kingdom not by the rite of circumcision, a rite confined thus far to one race, but by the will of God, they are received to a more merciful and more catholic covenant. See Rom. ii. 28, 29. ¶ *Nor of the will of the flesh.* Not by choice of parents, by natural descents. ¶ *Nor of the will of man.* Not by the will of *another* in any sense. This is thought to refer to the Jewish custom of *adopting* children, who were, by that adoption, transferred to the civil condition of a true child. But in Christ's kingdom, the gift of grace is made to men by no such laws, but by the sole will of God, replying to the faith of each soul which calls upon Him with faith in the name of the Redeemer. ¶ *But of God.* Christians or believers are born again, not by these means, but by the will of God, according to the means and in the modes prescribed by the Gospel. The power and grace by which men live a new life, come from Him, from His will. It is evident that the object of the writer is, 1. To assure us that the Gospel is free to all men, and therefore he denies and rejects all power in men to choose some, and repel others. 2. That he who believes is born again by the will of God, and by the Word of God, of whom it is his special purpose to speak in this whole treatise. 1 Pet. i. 23. But it is not said here that this birth spiritual comes by any *arbitrary and partial* will of the Almighty, but according to that will of God which is generally set forth in Holy Scripture.

14. *The Word was made flesh.* Was made man. The only-begotten Son of God "took our nature upon Him and was born of a pure virgin." And the collect for Christmas, by a nice discernment of this passage, adds as the reason which binds these verses together, "that *we being* regenerate and made God's children by adoption may daily be renewed by His Spirit." For the life which the Incarnate Word led upon earth is the new-life to which others are admitted by the covenant. And

14 And the Word was made flesh,[a] and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his [b]glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Fa-

a Gal. 4. 4.

b Is. 40. 5.

He gave men the *example* and the *power* to become sons of God. The word *flesh* is equivalent to man, as is often seen in Scripture. Gen. vi. 12; Is. xi. 5; lxxvi. 16; Matt. xxiv. 22. The Word of God, of whom he has been speaking such noble things, St. John now declares to be none other than Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary. He became man. He is Christ Jesus, our Lord, our Saviour. ¶ *Was made. Became man*, not by a change of substance, but by assumption of a new nature, the flesh. The body of Christ was created for Him by the power of God (Heb. x. 5); "conceived of the Holy Ghost." Lu. i. 35. He did not become another, and from being Divine become a creature, which is impossible; but He became or began to live as man, perfect in both natures. "Having said *Born of God*, to prevent surprise and trepidation at so great, so apparently incredible a grace as that men should be born of God, to assure us, he says: *and the Word was made flesh.* Why marvellest thou that men are born of God? Know that God Himself was born of man."—*St. Augustine.* "After saying that they were born of God, who received Him, he sets forth *the cause of this honor*, viz. the Word being made flesh. God's own Son was made the Son of man, that He might make the sons of men the sons of God."—*St. Chrysostom.* 1 John i. 1. ¶ *Dwelt among us.* Tabernacled with us; as one dwelling in a tent for a season. He was still the perfect Word of God, but dwelt for a time in the body, as in a tent, which was visible. The *Shechinah*, or symbol of Divine glory, formerly occupied the ancient tabernacl; the Word, which is the true glory of God, dwelt in the tabernacle of the flesh. Phil. ii. 6, 8. ¶ *We beheld His glory.* We the disciples, of whom the writer had been one specially favored. The glory of God was seen in Christ: 1. By His miracles, by which "He manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." Ch. ii. 11; xi. 4, 40. 2. By His holy and merciful character, that "honor that cometh from God only." Ch. v. 44; viii. 50. 3. By the miraculous display on the Mount of Transfiguration, which St. Peter terms "His Majesty." 2 Pet. i. 17; Luke ix. 29, 31. 4. The events which accompanied His resurrection and ascension, were also tokens of His glory and signs of His Divine nature. The word *glory* is the same which is used in the Greek version of the Old Testament, to signify that appearance of Jehovah to His people, which was called the Shechinah. Ex. xvi. 7, 10; Lev. ix. 6, 26. ¶ *The glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* A glory which manifested that degree of power and favor which could belong to God alone. This glory was sealed by a voice from heaven as belonging to the Son of God on three occasions. 1. At His Baptism. Matt, iii. 17. 2. On the Mount of Transfiguration. Matt. xvii. 5. 3. On Palm Sunday in the temple. John xii. 28. St. John also teaches that the glory of God was shown forth in the works and teaching of Jesus (xiii. 31), and especially in His precious death and resurrection. vii. 39. These proofs could consist only with one claiming to be the Son of God, equal with the Father V. 17. ¶ *Only-begotten.* Used by St. John of our Lord five times, and only of Him. Ch. i. 14, 18; iii. 16, 18; 1 Epis. iv. 9. It means literally an only child. Lu. vii. 12. It is used also of Isaac, who, as being the child of promise and supernaturally born, was in that sense only-begotten, though Ishmael was his half-brother. Heb. xi. 17; Gen. xxii. 12–16. Compare Gal. iv. 22–28; Gen. xvi. 15. The corresponding word in Hebrew means also very dear, and is translated in the Psalms "my *darling*." Ps. xxii. 20; xxxv. 17. In the New Testament, it therefore signifies that Jesus was the Son of God, in the sense that He alone was partaker of the same nature, substance and glory. The other

ther,) full of grace and truth.

15 ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was before me.

sense, that He was the most dearly beloved Son of God, follows of course. ¶ *Full of grace and truth.* In which two characters His glory shone to His disciples, and sweetly and powerfully convinced them of the truth of His claim to be the Son of God. He was full of grace. It was not a partial or occasional trait. It shone continually, and He did good to all, was kind, merciful, benevolent to all. His miracles were gracious; helping and blessing all who had need. And His words were *truth*, pure, profound, unmistakable truth. The conscience and reason of His faithful disciples were taught and directed, and they perceived in His truth the secure foundation of their faith in Him as the Son of God. The two great wants of sinners are *grace*, by which sins are pardoned and mercy obtained; and *truth*, in which faith, trust and hope may repose. In the Word of God made flesh, there is the fulness of both. He was made flesh, to pity; He was only-begotten of the Father, to pardon and save us.

15. *John bare witness of Him.* John, the son of Zacharias. He was sent especially to give this testimony to the Messias, which he did by his preaching, and his baptism of Jesus. This was an important fact in the eyes of the Evangelists. For while they saw that God had sent John for this purpose, and that all the Jews "held John to be a prophet" (Matt. xxi. 26), and confessed that he came "in the way of righteousness" (Matt. xxi. 32), his testimony to Jesus was beyond question, and went far to establish the fact, that He was the Christ. ¶ *He that cometh after me.* Cometh later in time. John was six months older than Jesus. He is believed to have begun his mission in Judea, on or near the great day of Atonement, the 10th of the Jewish month Tisri, September 29. Jesus came to him to be baptized probably the 6th of the following January, our Epiphany. But setting this aside, the Saviour came after John, in two senses: 1. In that He lived after John's death and did His greatest miracles and finished His work during that time. 2. In that His office of Messiah, was to fulfil and complete all that John had begun. ¶ *Is preferred before me.* Is superior to me. John the Baptist seems to have been taught after the manner of the ancient prophets, by some unmistakable sign or oracle (for he most surely believed), that Jesus the Messiah was to be exceedingly superior to himself. And yet he was the *greatest* of those born of woman. Matt. xi. 11; Lu. vii. 28. In what sense then, except that Christ was of a superior nature, could he call Him one preferred before Him? ¶ *He was before me.* He existed before me. It is in this sense that the writer cites this opinion, for this alone agrees with the tenor of this whole chapter. Now John was conceived and born before Jesus, and began his ministry before Him. Therefore the existence which Jesus had before John, was in some other nature than the flesh which He took from the substance of the Virgin. This was the Divine nature. And this taking human flesh we now call His *Incarnation.* See John viii. 58; vi. 62; xvii. 5. This then is an additional fact, that John the Baptist, who was allowed by the Jews to have been a true prophet, gave this clear testimony to the Divinity of Christ.

16. *And of His fulness.* These are not the words of the son of Zachary, but of the Evangelist, and a continuation of v. 14, wherein he had said that Christ was *full of grace and truth.* He now continues, "Of that fulness of grace and truth all we, His disciples, have received." This signifies that another argument by which St. John would press this subject, was, that he with all others had the testimony in themselves that the gifts received from Christ were proofs of a Divine Being. They had

16 And of his fulness[a] have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 [b]For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 [c]No man hath seen God at

[a] Col. 1. 19; & 2. 9, 10. [b] Rom. 5. 19–21; & 6. 14.

[c] Ex. 33. 20; Deut. 4. 12.

received the gifts of the Spirit, which testified to them that they were sons of God, and kept them in the faith, as St. John elsewhere reasons at large. 1 Epis. iv. 2, 3, 13, 14, 15. The same is true of all Christians. They have the Spirit to witness with them so long as, obediently following the precepts of Christ, they pray earnestly, and faithfully study the Scriptures. ¶ *Grace for grace.* Three interpretations of these words are worthy of mention. 1. Grace for grace, one for another. We Christians have received the grace of the Gospel, which is richer and freer, in place of that lesser grace given by the law. So that if Moses was great as a prophet and mediator in that Jewish law, the Son is a greater than he in the better covenant of the Gospel. 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8. 2. We receive grace *freely.* This is not an unusual way of speaking. It is a free gift, not given to our merits, but to our needs. 3. It may mean, *abundant grace.* Grace upon grace, or grace which increaseth. The grace of Christ given to His followers, is of living power, and, being improved, goes on from one degree to another. This nobler gift marks the plenitude of the Son of God, who gives freely to all believers.

17. *The law was given.* The Judaic system, as contained in the first five books of the Old Testament. ¶ *By Moses.* By Moses, as a servant of God and "mediator" for the time between Him and the Jews. The history of this transaction is found in the Book of Exodus. The contrast between him and Christ, from the two covenants, is frequently insisted on by St. Paul. In the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians he expressly treats of this contrast, in order to show the inferiority of the law to the Gospel in its nature, privileges and end. In that to the Hebrews, the writer makes the same contrast apparent between Moses and the High Priest of our profession, the Saviour. Heb. viii. 5, 6; xii. 18–27. ¶ *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Grace and truth* elegantly stand for the whole Gospel covenant. It is a system which especially deserveth such names. The law was to break in a hard and rebellious nation, to keep them separate from others, to bind them to a system of shadows and types, all looking to a future perfection, which itself did not profess to have. But the Gospel was perfect in all its parts. It had perfect truth, such as needed no other revelation to finish it; it was the final gift of God, His perfect system of grace. No other prophet was to be expected afterwards to show another covenant. Moses, the Jews said, was truly sent by God. St. John tells them, Christ was as truly sent to be "the mediator of a better covenant."

18. *No man hath seen God at any time.* If we look to the word used in the other part of the sentence, we shall judge, that *to see God* means in this connection, to see Him so as to declare Him or make known His will as it is made known in the Gospel. And this Moses could not do, nor any mere man, as St. Paul reasons. "For this One was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch *as He who buildeth the house* hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded of some one, but He that built all things is God. And Moses was faithful in all his house (the Law) *as a servant,* for a testimony of those things to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over His own house; (the Gospel) whose house we are," &c. Heb. iii. 2, &c. Many had seen the visible appearance of the Second Person of the Trinity in the times before John (Gen. xxxii.; Ex. xxxiii.; Is. vi.), but they saw Him not in such a sense as to be able "to declare Him," i. e. to reveal His whole purpose and will. See Rom. xi. 34; Matt. xi. 27. ¶ *The only-begotten Son.* Here is Christ contrasted

any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

19 ¶ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou [a]that [‖]prophet? and he answered, No.

a Deut. 18. 15, 18.

‖ Or, *a prophet.*

with any and all of the best of men. The saints of old had in some sense seen God; but when compared with knowledge which the Son had of Him, they are said to have not seen Him. See note, verse 14. ¶ *In the bosom of the Father.* In the closest intimacy. This phrase is used of the closest and dearest human relationship. It teaches us that intimate mysterious union of the Persons of the Trinity in one only substance, which is spoken of in the first verses and this chapter. ¶ *He hath declared Him.* Christ alone hath seen God in such a manner as to reveal fully His entire will in saving men. For after this revelation there is no need of another. He is the way, the truth, and the life, the revealer of eternal life. He has brought life and immortality to light, and the knowledge of God which is needful for all. 1 John v. 20; Heb. viii. 6 to end.

19. *This is the record.* This was the testimony of the son of Zachary. The Evangelist will be seen, on looking back, to have come gradually to the perfection of the covenant of grace, through the line of the proofs of the Divinity of our Lord. He was eternally with God; was Creator, was in the world; John testifying of Him, and the character of His Gospel, superior as it is to the Law given by Moses; all His miracles and doctrines attesting the glory of the only begotten. He now begins the more extended proof of this same truth, which runs through his whole book; sometimes in narrative, but mostly in didactic form. He says, "these things are written, that ye might *believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.*" Ch. xx. 31. ¶ *When the Jews sent.* John came as a prophet. He was popular among his people. They could not bear the Gospel because it spoke of their system as to end; but John they believed to be a prophet of their own, witnessed by all the signs of that office. They sent to him, therefore, to inquire the great object of his mission. This sending to John was probably done by the Sanhedrim, whose official duty it was to make such inquiries. They were the guardians of the national religion. Their object was to discover whether he were a true or false prophet. ¶ *Priests.* See notes, Matt. viii. 4. ¶ *Levites.* See Luke x. 32. These were probably the most learned and zealous members of the Sanhedrim.

20. *And he confessed.* He denied all pretence to being Messiah, in the most solemn manner. St. John would not have used so strong language, if it had been at all doubtful what had been the testimony of the son of Zachary. ¶ *I am not the Christ.* I am not the Messiah, of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. Verse 45. To this office John made no claim, but gave out that he was only a "*voice* in the wilderness" preceding a little the Word of God. John the Baptist is an illustrious instance of fidelity and humility, the two virtues most necessary in a prophet, but especially in him; fidelity, to preach to all the plain truth, which was startling and fearful, of the coming of One "whose fan was in His hand" to purge His floor, and humility to keep himself out of sight, while he labored "to prepare the way of the Lord."

21. *Art thou Elias?* Or Elijah. See note, Matt. xi. 14. His life is recorded 1 Kings xvii. to 2 Kings ii. His departure from this lower earth was not after the manner of men, but in a chariot of fire. Malachi uses this circumstance,

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as [a]said the prophet Esaias.

a Is. 40. 3.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, say-

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and foretells that one in the spirit and power of Elijah would come before Messias appeared. , Mal. iv. 5, 6. This last prophecy closed the Old Testament. The Jews expected Elijah himself to return, and hence they question John, if he were Elias. This he denied, for while he fulfilled the prophecy, he probably was not inspired to know that he did so in all its fulness. ¶ *That prophet.* See Matt. xvi. 14. Some of the Jews of that age supposed that Jeremiah would return to the earth. He was one of the greatest of the prophets, and it was believed by the Jews that the Messianic reign would be ushered in by a return of the prophets to life. See Deut. xviii. 15.

23. *I am the voice, &c.* See note, Matt. iii. 3.

24. *Of the Pharisees.* See note, Matt. iii. They were, as a sect, exceedingly jealous for the preservation of the Jewish religion as it then was. John was practising the rite of baptism, in a way unknown to them; was baptizing large numbers, not of proselytes, but Jews themselves; not binding them to closer observance of Jewish rites, but to a new doctrine of repentance and remission of sins in a Messianic kingdom. They could not understand, and could ill bear this, in one who laid no claim to being Elias or the great prophet. It was a maxim with the Pharisees that no new rite was to be added to religion, except by God. Their doubt concerning John is expressed in their question. The Sanhedrim was mostly of the sect of the Pharisees. Acts xxiii.

25. *Why baptizest thou then?* "Why dost thou baptize in so solemn and public a way, a thing, till now, unheard of?" Or, "On what authority, or to what end, is it done?" Baptism was not unknown to the Jews, but it was confined to *proselytes* from the Gentiles. John changed this, and administered it to Jews. It was mostly private and occasional. John came *baptizing*, as his chief work. What did this mean? By what right did he change the customs of the nation? The Jews probably expected some great change and purgation at the coming of Messias, from the words of their own prophets. Jer. xxxi. 31–34; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; and Zech. xiii. 1. But why John should do it, when he rejected any claim to be the Christ or Elias, they could not understand.

26. *I baptize with water.* John declares the simplicity of the rite, and that it was a part of the command of the Messiah who was to follow him. It was with water only, a preparatory rite to mark men, for the time, as being in a state of expectation of the Messiah. It was like his preaching, commanded by God to make ready the way for Jesus. This answer, thus publicly delivered, must have caused the greatest attention in all men, and led them to watch eagerly for the Christ. ¶ *One among you.* He is not far off—not to come after a long period—but though unknown as yet, He is here. Christ may have been then in the number of the multitudes, which crowded the banks of the Jordan, though as yet He was unknown both to John and the Jews. Jesus was now about thirty years of age, and had grown up in the obscurity of Nazareth. He had not entered on His mission of saving mankind, and had wrought no miracles. The

ing, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not:

27 He it is who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in [a]Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

a Judges 7. 24.

childish legends of the Romish Church concerning His youth, are unworthy of credit. He was known as the son of a carpenter, to very few, and was observed by some to be passing holy and wise. But even His relative John did not know Him to be the Christ, until after His baptism. Hence he says truly, "Whom ye know not." How humble and patient should be the inferior ministers of the Church, when the chief was content to wait so long before declaring Himself. Can He be satisfied with our services, when we seek glory from each other? True honor in religion must be found in forgetfulness of self, in seeking first and only the honor of God, in striving to gain souls to the Saviour. The humility of John is worthy of note. What shall we say of that of Jesus?

27. *Whose shoe's latchet.* See note, Matt. iii. 11. The latchet of the shoe was the thong by which the sandal was bound to the foot, crossing it and tying around the ankle. The faith of John was remarkable. In the solitudes, where he had spent his days, he had learned to compare himself with all that the prophets had said of Messias, and to feel how great was this Prince to be. His ideas of Him were erroneous in some things, but as far as his own duty went, he was instructed by the Holy Spirit in the ancient prophecies.

28. *In Bethabara.* Meaning the *house or place of the crossing*; the fords of the Jordan, opposite Jericho; the spot where the Israelites crossed the Jordan to enter the Holy Land. Josh. ii.; Judges vii. 24. Here began that crossing from the old covenant to the new, from the elements of the world to the Church of the first born. Many copies read Bethany for Bethabara, but probably incorrectly. Lieut. Lynch says of the place which is now called "Elmeshra:" "This ford is consecrated by tradition and the geographical face of the country, as being the place where the Israelites passed over with the ark of the covenant; and where our blessed Saviour was baptized by John." Myriads visit it yearly to bathe in its sacred waters. ¶ *Beyond Jordan.* Used of either side of the river, in the Hebrew. Bethabara is supposed to have been on the eastern side.

29. *The next day.* The day after the messengers came to him from the Jews. ¶ *Behold the Lamb of God.* A lamb was sacrificed in the temple daily, morning and evening, according to the law of Moses. One was killed and eaten at the feast of the Passover, to celebrate the mercy of God, in delivering the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt. They were slain also as offerings by individuals, in order to expiate particular sins. Now the Jews understood that these sacrifices could not of themselves take away sins, but were "shadows of the heavenly things." They understood then, by this, that Jesus was pointed out by John as One who was to do effectually that which the animals, so often sacrificed by them, did carnally and typically, that is, *take away sin.* See Heb. x. ¶ *Which taketh away.* St. John the Baptist must have had in his mind the truths revealed by Isaiah (liii.), where the prophet declares plainly the great doctrine of atonement, that Christ was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The same use is made of that passage by our Lord, Lu. xxii. 37, and by the Holy Spirit, Acts viii. 32–35. ¶ *Sin of the world.* Note the singular, *the sin.* It is one sin, the whole mass as it appears abstractly. It was one offering, to break the power, to wash out the guilt, to provide pardon and freedom from all sin, not in one class or nation of men, but for *all men.*

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the [a]Lamb of God, [b]which [‖]taketh away the sin of the world!

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God.

35 ¶ Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

[a] Ex. 12. 3; Is. 53. 7; Acts 8. 32; Rev. 5. 6, &c.

[‖] Or, *beareth.* [b] Is. 53. 11; 1 Cor. 15. 3; Gal. 1. 4.

1 John ii. 2. The expiation made by Christ on the cross, atoned for all sin, rendering it possible for all to repent and be accepted on the terms of the Gospel. "God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind."—*Catechism.*

31. *I knew Him not.* Did not know Him to be the Christ. For John evidently knew Him to be a holy and just man, and esteemed Him as greater than himself. Matt. iii. 14. A sign was given beforehand to John. But he could not know who was the Christ until he himself saw that sign. Prophets were left to the common resources of human reason, as other men, in all things except their special prophecies. 1 Pet. i. 10. They were considered as supernaturally controlled and borne out of themselves during the prophetic inspirations. It was common for them to express ignorance of things aside from their direct revelations. John was to know the Messiah by a sign, and could not know Him without the sign. ¶ *Should be made manifest.* Should be pointed out by the last of the Jewish prophets, so that the pious of the Jews could not doubt. ¶ *Israel.* The descendants of Jacob. The Jews.

32. *Bare record.* Publicly testified after it happened that he had seen it. See note, Matt. iii. 16, 17.

33. *Baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* Purifies the soul by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost, even as baptism by water purifies the body. Acts ii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 21. The law of His kingdom was to be of another sort than the world had ever known. The rites of it were to be no longer carnal, but spiritual, to the perfecting of the conscience and the sanctification of the soul.

34. *This is the Son of God.* John the Baptist had drawn this faith from either diligent study of the Old Testament, which had taught the better Jews that there was such a Being, or from direct inspiration. It is well to note that the highest titles given our Lord, were given Him from the first. Matt. i. 23; Luke i. 32–35. They were not given by afterthought. They belonged to Him too plainly to be omitted, even by those who could not sound the depths of their meaning. He was called the Son of God before he had done miracles and pious works.

35. *Two of His disciples.* One was Andrew (v. 40.), the other is supposed to have been John, the writer of this gospel, who generally omits his own name. They were standing together while Jesus was passing by. John the Baptist had foretold publicly that he must decrease, and he points his disciples to Jesus without delay. He willingly makes room for the Messiah,

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where ‖dwellest thou?

‖ Or, *abidest.*

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though he did not understand the spiritual nature of His kingdom.

36. *Looking upon Jesus.* Looking fixedly at Him with reverence and affection, he points Him out by word and gesture. The Jewish prophets were often very brief and abrupt in their manner of teaching; and the two disciples doubtless understood from this short address that they were to follow Jesus.

37. *They followed Jesus.* They followed Him literally; went behind Him at some distance. Mark their *modesty.* They do not stop and ask Him for signs and proofs, nor do they offer their service uninvited. They are content to follow humbly in silence. For though they may then have believed Jesus to have been a great prophet, they were by no means sure that he needed or would accept them as followers. We often err in reading these Scriptures, and should remember that the immediate following of Jesus, while He was in the flesh, was not a duty common to all who loved Him, but was the privilege of a few. Many who believed on Him were suffered to remain in their homes. The seventy disciples seem not to have travelled around with Him. Only the twelve *chosen* ones were His constant attendants. Modesty in these two, and a just perception of what was due to an inspired Prophet, kept them silent; earnest desires for truth kept them following. Now, all men should seek Christ with diligence in the ways appointed, for we know that such is His will.

38. *What seek ye?* Why are ye following me in silence? Expectation of some good, and a timid desire for some duty, what, they hardly knew, urged them on. Jesus turns to notice them, that they may not so much inform Him, but know their own hearts, and by expressing their wishes obtain them. St. Chrysostom says: "Hence we learn that when we once begin to form good resolutions, God gives us opportunities enough of improvement. Christ asks the question, not because He needed to be told, but in order to encourage familiarity and confidence, and show that He thought them worthy of His instructions." ¶ *Rabbi.* A Jewish word, meaning my master, or teacher. The author gives the meaning of the word in Greek, which shows that he wrote his gospel for Gentiles as well as Jews. ¶ *Where dwellest Thou?* A delicate, modest reply. "Where dost Thou dwell, that we may come daily and listen to Thee, may know Thy ways and wisdom." Every rabbi gathered pupils about him. These two offer not to be such outright, for that would have been presuming, but they imply that they wish to learn of Jesus, and would know where to find Him. No one ever sought Him in vain. Reader have you sought Him? or sought Him with zeal, discretion, and earnestness, in the ways of Scripture? If not, begin to seek that you may find, and may have Him to dwell in your heart by faith.

39. *Come and see.* It was graciously answered by the Saviour. He had no regular dwelling, and was not intending to set up any such school as their rabbis did; but He waives these matters by bidding them follow Him for the time and see where He then was abiding. ¶ *Abode with Him.* Passed the night there. This was near the Jordan, and probably with some hospitable person who entertained Jesus from love of Him. Jesus had dwelt till now in Nazareth, but after this time mostly in Capernaum with Simon Peter. ¶ *The tenth hour.*

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about ‖the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias; which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

‖ *That was two hours before night.*

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas; which is, by interpretation, ‖a stone.

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have

‖ Or, *the Anointed.* ‖ Or, *Peter.*

The Jews divided their day into twelve hours, from sunrise to sunset. It was therefore about two hours to sunset. St. John does not always use the Jewish mode of reckoning, but now describing a scene where Jews alone were concerned, he reckons by their time. In the last chapters he computes by Roman time, which was like our own.

41. *He first findeth.* Probably the following day, he goes to search for Peter, and brings him to see Jesus. "This," says Venerable Bede, "was truly to find the Lord; viz., to have fervent love for Him, together with a care of our brother's salvation." 1 John iv. 21. ¶ *We have found the Messias.* The Jewish nation was expecting Him. Peter, in common with all devout men of his age, was familiar with the fact that their king must soon appear. See ii. 25-38; Mark xv. 43. They were suffering great severities from the Romans. Andrew, therefore, announces the finding the Messias, as one would naturally do who was anxious for temporal deliverance and prosperity. They had as yet but vague and mistaken ideas of the true nature of Christ and the religion which He was to promulgate by their means. See note on Messias, Matt. i. 1. As the word Jesus marks the person of our Saviour, so Christ or Messiah signifies his office.

42. *Cephas.* A Syriac word meaning the same as Peter, i. e. a stone. He was the rock on whose preaching the Church was to be begun. See notes, Matt. xvi. 17, 18. Simon was a man of singular firmness and courage. Bold, impetuous, constant to that which he sought, he rises as an example of the best of human qualities. That he was suffered to fall so shamefully, was a proof that the best of man's powers are weakness, even as his wisdom is folly when compared with Divine strength and wisdom. Jesus, the Son of God, changed Simon's name to Peter, even as He had before changed the names of saints in the Old Testament, to show that He was the one Lord under both covenants. Jesus addressed Simon, who was probably a stranger to Him, with the titles of his family—Son of Jona. This was apt to induce him to believe in His supernatural knowledge.

43. *Into Galilee.* From whence He had come to be baptized by John. He came near to Jerusalem to meet John, lest the obscurity of Galilee might give room for cavil. ¶ *Philip.* On the way He meets with Philip, and invites him to follow Him for the time. Philip followed Jesus, being of the same city as Andrew and Peter, and probably learning from them the truth. This was, however, a different call from that recorded by Matthew, ch. iv. St. John is probably concerned only with the period at which each of these persons believed Jesus to be Messiah. Matthew describes

found him of whom Moses [a]in the law, and the [b]prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing

a Gen. 3. 15; Deut. 18. 18. *b* Is. 4, 2; & 7. 14; Mic. 5. 2.

come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed,[c] in whom is no guile!

c Ps. 32. 2; & 73. 1.

their actual call to be constantly with Him.

44. *Bethsaida.* See Matt. xi. 21. ¶ *The city of.* The village where Andrew and Peter had been living, situated on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Philip was therefore acquainted with them, hence his ready obedience to the word of Jesus. The friendship of good men often leads one to the knowledge of the Saviour. He is supposed also to have been named Bartholomew.

45. *Nathanael.* The name signifies *are given by God.* The ancients esteemed him to be learned in the Scriptures. He displays an aptness in them in his reply to Philip, showing that he was aware of the nature of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. ¶ *Moses in the law.* In the first five books of the Old Testament, called by the Jews the Law, because it was the most important subject of them. Prophecies of the Messiah occur in them: 1. In words, Gen. iii. 15. xlix. 10; Deut. xviii. 15, 18. 2. By its types and shadows, Heb. x. ¶ *And the prophets.* David and others. Ps. ii. xlv.; Is. liii.; Jer. xxiii. 5; Dan. ix. 24–27. ¶ *Jesus of Nazareth.* That is, This Jesus is He who is our Messiah, as foretold by them. ¶ *Son of Joseph.* They spoke according to common fame, not being as yet instructed that He was the Son of the Virgin only, or that he had been born in Bethlehem of Judah.

46. *Can there any good thing, &c.* "You urge a contradiction, for by the Scriptures no prophet even, much less Messiah, is to arise from that poor, ignoble, and evil village." See John vii. 52. See note, Matt. ii. 23. Nathanael was correct in his remark. No prophet came from Nazareth. But how fatal would have been the consequence to him, if he had refused instruction. And equally fatal is prejudice now, which seizing some one portion of truth, refuses to be taught, and to try to learn all the revealed will of God. ¶ *Come and see.* Philip was too much in earnest not to have his friend convinced by ocular demonstration, or had too high a regard for his superior skill in learning to dispute with him. He invites him to the evidence of *facts*, which had convinced himself, and which is the best evidence in all things. Nathanael, led by a more ignorant friend, sees and believes; the Pharisees, hardened in their subtleties, evade the most convincing displays of Divine power and wisdom. Now the penitent who trusts and obeys, receives a satisfying faith; the skeptic, who doubts and reasons, destroys in his own mind the foundations of faith in Christ. In one sense "Love teacheth more than doctrine can."

47. *An Israelite indeed.* One truly named after Israel or Jacob; one who is a true follower of the law, and so arrives at its real meaning — the Saviour. Rom. ix. 6; John viii. 39. ¶ *No guile.* No deceit. Nathanael had spoken bluntly to Philip, his first thought, that Jesus could not be the Christ, since He came from Nazareth, which was a mean, obscure place. Jesus commends his plainness since it was sincerely a conviction of his mind, and now alludes to it, to manifest that He had heard it, by superhuman means. For as Nathanael came directly with Philip, it must have persuaded him of the supernatural power of Jesus, that He should thus know what had passed between them. So at least say some learned men. Sincerity and integrity are marked virtues in the Christian.

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter[a] ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

a Gen. 28. 12; Acts 1. 10.

They should not degenerate into rudeness, but preserve his mind free to receive the truth.

48. *Whence knowest Thou me?* They were strangers, had never met. Nathanael is surprised at such an address. Without lack of modesty, he may have recognized the trait of his character, usually given him by his friends. Or he may have declined the praise, conscious of his own infirmities, and asked why it was given to him. ¶ *When thou wast under the fig-tree.* This refers to some fact known only by Divine inspiration, or some angelic mediation. It may have been: 1. The call of Philip. They were alone. They came at once to Jesus. How could he know of the words which passed between them, words which seemed to deny the Messiahship of Jesus? And to one skilled in the peculiar language of the prophets, this may have been an implied allusion to Zech. iii. 10, a prophecy of the Christ. 2. It is possible that Nathanael was then engaged in some act of devotion or meditation; perhaps some doubt tormenting him in regard to the ways of God, the ancient prophecies, or the events concerning John the Baptist, then exciting general attention, and which doubt was now strangely answered by this meeting with Christ. See Micah iv. 5. Such a course of reasoning in part befell the Eunuch of Candace. He was meditating on prophecy, and was perplexed; a messenger from God met him, his doubts vanished, and he believed. Acts viii. 26 to end. The mind in such a process of events often grasps the diviner truths of God's word,

in a sort of inspired state. Its instincts are alive; it sees the connections of truth, which pass like lightning through it, and is instantly and solidly convinced. Thus this learned Jew discovered in the few words which passed here, the validity of the claim of Jesus, nor stopped to debate with Him concerning Nazareth. All men are not called nor converted by one and the same means, and we may not doubt but that Nathanael was convinced on good grounds, and could himself have defended his conviction with good reasoning, if required to do so. We can only conjecture what those grounds were. St. John is only dealing with facts, nor delays longer with any one incident that suits his great end of showing forth the glory of Jesus.

49. *Rabbi.* See note, Matt. xxiii. 10. ¶ *The Son of God.* That glorious Being of whom the prophets wrote. You have knowledge which surpasses that of the prophets. "That our Lord then had that knowledge, had penetrated into his mind, had not blamed but praised his hesitation, proved to Nathanael that He was the true Christ." —*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *The King of Israel.* This was a title of the Messiah. It here limits the other phrase and shows in what sense Nathanael had called Jesus the Son of God, He was the Messiah, but to his yet feeble faith, the King of the Jews only, a monarch to rule over them, to renew their state and to give the kingdoms of the world to them. It was long before the disciples could begin to break up this fascinating dream, and behold the Son of God, not

CHAPTER II.

AND the third day there was a marriage in [a]Cana of Galilee;

a Josh. 19. 28.

and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And both Jesus was called,

as King of Israel only, but as King of saints. St. John in writing this chapter has introduced these words of Nathanael as a testimony of a learned Jew. And it is a valid argument. He was without guile, he was acquainted with prophecies, he was convinced against his prejudices, that, to the best of his faith, *Jesus was the Christ.*

50. *Greater things.* This was a single fact. Greater proofs would be afforded him.

51. *Verily, verily.* Amen, Amen. At the beginning of a sentence it signifies the strongest possible assertion; at the end, a desire or prayer, as in English, So be it. St. John has it most frequently, because he relates those more spiritual doctrines which require constant and devout attention. Here it may be intended to warn us that the mode of seeing shall be with the spiritual understanding, not with the bodily eyes. ¶ *Ye shall see.* 1. At the Judgment with the bodily eyes. 2. Now with the spirit ye shall understand by the works done by Me, that the way to heaven is made plain. ¶ *Heaven open.* The way to eternal life restored. To signify the anger of God the heavens are said to be shut, Lev. xxvi. 19; His favor by the open heaven, Mal. iii. 10. Here in its spiritual sense, it means that God has now provided for man a way to eternal life and happiness in His presence. There is evident allusion to the vision of Jacob. Gen. xxviii. 10–13. The ladder joined heaven and earth. Angels, ministering spirits, were passing to and fro on it. The Lord stood above it. Hence Jacob says: "This is the *gate of heaven.*" Here it is *heaven opened.* Jesus uses language familiar to a man like Nathanael, when He gives a spiritual interpretation to this dream of the patriarch. Thus the disciple would learn by faith that He was the way which joined heaven and earth, and through His mediation the angels ministered to the heirs of salvation. Heb. i. 14. ¶ *Angels of God.* Those bright, holy, spiritual beings, who are constantly employed in ministering to the servants of God. They are here declared to do this *upon* the Son of man, since by the precious merit alone of the atonement they are allowed to do it. But for this men would be cast down in despair; now on the glorious stairway of the merits of Christ, they ascend and descend, i. e. are constantly engaged in such works of love and mercy as befit their natures. Comparing this verse with the vision of Jacob, we see one change in the style. There the Lord was above the ladder; here He has taken the form of man, and as *Son of man is* the ladder, the means of communication between us and God. ¶ *The Son of man.* Nathanael called Him Son of God. This He denies not, but shows him that his faith will be more perfect, when he learns His true glory as the Son of man, the mediator between God and a lost race. "If Jacob, who was named Israel, saw the ladder, and Nathanael was an Israelite indeed, there was a fitness in our Lord telling him Jacob's dream; as if He had said: Whose name thou art called by his dream hath appeared unto thee."—*St. Augustine.* The same father adds that the reason why Nathanael was not found among the Apostles, was that he was "so learned and versed in the law." Others make him to have been Bartholomew. His character was lovely and of good report. Let us seek after "the praise of God," by a life of godly sincerity, that being freed from the carnal maxims of worldly men, and given to the Scriptures, we may see the more spiritual workings of the kingdom of grace both in ourselves and in the Church at large.

CHAPTER II.

1. *The third day.* The third day after the conversation with Nathanael.

and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what [a]have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the

[a] 2 Sam. 16. 10; & 19. 22.

¶ *Cana.* Called *of Galilee*, to distinguish it from another of the same name of the tribe of Ephraim. *Cana-Galil*, a small village containing 300 inhabitants, now occupies the same site. It is six miles north-east of Nazareth. It was the native place of Nathanael. John xxi. 2. Of Cleophas or Alphaeus, and Simon the Canaanite. ¶ *The mother of Jesus.* The wedding is supposed to have been in the house of Cleophas, whose wife Mary was the sister of the Blessed Virgin. John xix. 26. At this time Mary was probably a widow.

2. *His disciples.* Those who followed Him then as disciples or learners, for the twelve were not yet chosen. The persons were probably the five mentioned in the last chapter. ¶ *Marriage.* The Jewish marriage feasts continued a week. Many came to honor the feast and to behold the prophet, whose fame began to be known.

3. *When they wanted wine.* It began to fail. So many came beyond the expectation of those who provided the feast that their provision of wine failed. Hospitality was sacredly observed by the Jews. To fail in it was either a sin or a shame, a sin, if voluntary, a great shame, if compelled by poverty. ¶ *They have no wine.* They have not enough. She spake as a relation or friend of the family, to save the credit of her friends. Why did she expect Jesus to supply wine, when she had no knowledge of His power of miracles? Probably remembering the words of the angel to her, and hearing what He had said to Nathanael (ch. i. 51), she did not expect such a miracle as He wrought, but that He could in some way remedy the defect.

4. *Woman.* The English once used the word *Dame*, with persons familiar or friendly. The Greek word has something of the same force. It implies no disrespect, as this word would do in our mouths. The Fathers thought a mild reproof to be contained in this answer of Jesus. But our Lord used this same address to His mother, in a moment of tenderest care for her. Ch. xix. 26. ¶ *What have I to do with thee?* "Why do you call on me for obedience in such things as are beyond your knowledge?" 1. It is a reproof. And Jesus gave this reproof not as a Son of man, but as a King of a higher nature, which could not be controlled by her, a mere mortal. 2. It is an assertion of His independence in such things of all mortals. She asked Him to supply a want. She is bidden at once to remember that she cannot guide the power, which reigns in Him. As a child He obeyed, and was reverent to her. As a man He was careful and tender to her. But as the Son of God, she is but a mortal, favored indeed, but a mortal still infinitely below the Supreme in all things. The Romish superstition of worship to the Virgin is here cut up by the roots. If she could not mediate in a small matter of wine, without a reproof, with Christ on earth, how absurd is it to think that she can answer the foolish prayers which are offered to puppets bearing her name. Says St. Augustine: "Our Lord as God *had not a mother*, though as man He had; and the miracle He was about to work was the act of His Divinity, not of human infirmity." ¶ *Mine hour.* Some say, The time, the fitting moment for working a miracle *here* is not yet come. And this is a good sense. For it was suitable that the want should be supplied, when felt by some of the party. Otherwise, while the wine might be gained, and the credit of the family saved, the force of the miracle, viz. its spiritual design (v. 11), would have been lost. And such a sense the Virgin seems to have drawn from His words. She bids the servants wait on His bidding. 2. Others say that the time of

servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

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publicly working miracles had not come. That wonderful course of *public instruction by miracles*, was not yet begun. This miracle was in a measure private; its end to confirm His disciples in their faith.

5. *Do it.* Do it, though you may not comprehend His meaning. She evidently expected that Jesus would in some manner gratify her wish. Hence it is probable that His manner and look, conveyed such a feeling to her mind, while His words taught her a higher truth.

6. *Six water-pots.* Large stone pots to hold clean water. As the size of these vessels is matter of conjecture, these words of Dr. Clark are instructive: "We saw (in Cana) large massy stone pots, answering the description given of the ancient vessels of the country; not preserved or exhibited as relics, but lying about disregarded by the present inhabitants as antiquities, with whose original use they were unacquainted. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons, was once common in the country." ¶ *Manner of the purifying.* The stricter Jews were in the habit of very frequent washings. Mark vii. 3, 4. In a dry country where springs were few, they used vessels to hold clean water for this purpose. ¶ *Two or three firkins apiece.* This measure is not now known. Some say seven pints, some seven gallons. The quantity was probably considerable.

7. *Unto them.* The servants. It was their business to do it. It was doubtless some hour of the day. All could see the act. Jesus came not near the vessels, but ordered the servants to fill the water-pots. They were not wine vessels; so no mixture with the remaining wine dregs could be suggested as giving taste to the water. The miracle was beyond question. The servants would know whether it were water or wine which was put in. ¶ *To the brim.* For bounty and proof. Bounty, that all may taste and be satisfied; proof, that no after addition can be made. Jesus uses no words or gestures to mark the change of water to wine, but simply wills it. His commands to the servants mark that He has produced the new substance by a miracle. This act of changing one liquid into the substance of another without means and mixtures, could be done only by supernatural powers.

8. *Draw out now.* The servants would have stumbled at this order, if they had not been warned by Mary to do all that Jesus bade them do. They discover the change as they draw, and carry the new wine to the festive company. The moral design of the miracle was effected, by the disciples seeing the course of it, and hearing the opinion of the guests. *Their* faith was strengthened. ¶ *The governor.* Some principal guest, whose duties are now unknown. He seems to have been the one to arrange the order of ceremonies, to have tasted, some say, to bless also the viands, and others that he was a priest whose duty it was to instruct the newly-married couple in their duties. He is at least the proper and competent witness of the new wine.

9. *The water that was made wine.* It was truly wine, of that pure flavor that he discovers at once that it was the best of its kind. He acts as nature prompts; calls his friend and expresses his gratification. It is a mark of ingenuousness, that each event is related so simply.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles

There is no search for effect; every one acts as he would have acted if there had been no miracle.

10. *Every man.* That is, as a general thing. It is natural for men to do it. He mentions a well-known fact. ¶ *Well drunk.* This word in Greek and Hebrew has a good and a bad sense. It is of no great importance in a moral sense, which is here prominent; for the governor is only stating what was usually done, without the least comment on what was then passing. His own taste was true, nor can we suppose that he or the others were then indulging to excess. The word means often, to drink moderately and naturally, to be satisfied, and is even used of food. Gen. xliii. 34; Haggai i. 6; Hos. xiv. 7. It signifies simply when the edge of the taste is removed, the thirst is quenched and men forget to be nice. The relation which this passage has to the virtue of temperance is interesting. We note: 1. That the Jews were a temperate people. It seemed no more immoral in their eyes to increase wine, than to increase salt or bread. Wine was a production of their land by providential arrangement. They used it in their religious feasts freely. It was offered in the temple as a *drink-offering* to the Lord. Numb. xv. 10. These customs and opinions among a people temperate, and using simple, light and often acid wines, prevented any evil consequence from this example. And no others can suffer, for the Scripture plainly condemns intemperance and excess. 2. Supposing the quantity large, does not suppose intoxication as a necessary consequent. A Jewish wedding feast lasted a week, was free to all. Numbers went in and out. Each took a little. Nor is it necessary to suppose that all this wine was consumed then. Our Lord cannot be supposed to have allowed excess, or have hallowed it by His presence. 3. The objection sometimes made to this act lies equally against creation. The Son of God created the vine, and that instinct in man which leads him to use it. But in this, as in all things, He leaves men free to choose between evil and good. If one will abuse wine, he receives the certain penalty, nor can with any face (but a bloated, impudent one) plead any excuse from creation or Scripture for his abuse. 4. St. John had not a design to touch on this virtue of temperance, or he would doubtless have satisfied every mind in regard to this transaction. His end is stated v. 11, the glory of the Son of God—the belief of His disciples. 5. Scripture leaves temperance free on both sides; to one who would abstain altogether, it offers instances of total abstinence; the Nazarites, Judges xiii. 5; Lu. i. 15; the Rechabites, Jer. xxxv. 6. Compare Ro. xv. 21; 1 Cor. viii. 8, 13: to the rest of men it condemns all excess and drunkenness. Deut. xxi. 20; 1 Cor. v. 11; vi. 10. It places temperance, i. e., self-control in all things, among the graces of the Holy Spirit. Gal. v. 23; 2 Pet. i. 6. Dr. McKnight thus comments: "Our Lord's furnishing wine for this feast by miracle, showeth that on some occasions a more than ordinary cheerfulness, arising from the use of the creatures which God's power has formed, and His bounty bestowed on men, is by no means inconsistent with piety, but rather conduces to it, when the benefits are *sanctified to us by the word of God and prayer* (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5), i. e. when they are used in moderation, as the word of God directs, and with due expressions of thankfulness."

11. *This beginning of miracles.* This

did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

12 ¶ After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

13 ¶ And the Jews' [a]passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting:

15 And when he had made a

a Ex. 12. 14; Deut. 16. 1, 16.

first miracle. All the stories, therefore, which are forged of miracles done in the childhood of Jesus, are as false as they are foolishly conceived. St. John calls this a *sign*. A sign proves somewhat. This is more than a miracle, i. e., a wonderful deed. ¶ *Manifested forth His glory*. An evident sign that He was the Son of God. This passage is used the second Sunday after Epiphany, as containing a remarkable manifestation of the power of the Lord Jesus. In it He changes the nature of substances, making that which was created water to become wine. This is a stretch of power to which no false magician or juggler has ever pretended. For to change the substance of created things, exceeds all but creative energy. With St. John this was the chief circumstance and influence about this sign. And it was a mighty weapon against the early heresies, which aimed to corrupt the faith in Christ as "the everlasting Son of the Father." ¶ *Believed on Him*. Were strengthened in their convictions. Before, they had heard John's testimony and the words of Jesus. They now see His power in action.

12. *Capernaum*. See note, Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *Brethren*. Relatives or cousins. The members of a family were called brethren by the Jews, as Abram and Lot, who were uncle and nephew (Gen. xiii. 8); Jacob and Laban, son and father-in-law. Gen. xix. 15. ¶ *Not many days*. As the Passover was nigh. Every Jew was required to go up at this feast to the temple. Our Lord and His disciples went to Jerusalem to all the great feasts, and obeyed the Jewish ritual in "fulfilling all righteousness."

13. *The Jews' passover*. Their great feast. See note, Matt. xxvi. 2–17. St. John wrote for Gentiles, and therefore marks this as a Jewish feast. Some of the early Christians celebrated a feast which they called the passover. ¶ *Went up to Jerusalem*. He went alone. He took not a crowd with Him, nor His few disciples. They had not begun to attend Him constantly as yet. Every male of the Jews was required to go up to Jerusalem *three times a year*. Ex. xxiii. 14, 17; Deut. xvi. 16; Lu. ii. 41. We must therefore consider Jesus as in the holy city thrice every year, during His ministry. This was the first passover. Three others are indicated by St. John. Ch. v. 1; vi. 4; xviii. 39. During these feasts He instructed the crowds who assembled from every part of the Holy Land, and by those crowds He was finally given up to death.

14. *In the temple*. In the outer courts which were intended for the Gentile worshippers. These uses of a sacred place were unholy, though sanctioned by the Sanhedrim. This expulsion of the tradesmen from the temple occurred twice in our Saviour's ministry. See Matt. xxi. 12. This was at the beginning, that at the close. This, when our Lord was little known, and able to do it only by some power dwelling in Him as a prophet—that, when a ready crowd was shouting hosannas at their expectation of His becoming king. In this case He teaches them as a prophet, zealous for religion; in that, as a king assuming the control of his domain.

15. *Small cords*. No staff could be carried into the temple. Jesus takes the small cords made of withes or rush-

scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence: make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, [a]The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said un-

a Ps. 69. 9.

es, with which the animals were bound. This circumstance shows that the might by which He did it, lay in Himself, not in the instrument which He used. ¶ *Changers' money.* See note, Matt. xxi. 12.

16. *Take these things hence.* The cages in which the doves were confined. They could not be loosed without loss to the owners. ¶ *My Father's house.* See Lu. ii. 49. He speaks as the Son in the house and dwelling-place of His Father. It was the conviction in the minds of the hearers that He spake the truth, which compelled them to obey Him. Their memories could supply terrible examples from the Old Testament, of the danger of withstanding a prophet. 1 Kings xviii. 40; 2 Kings i. 9, 14; v. 27. Conscience aided to the same end, but besides all there seems to have been a superhuman power, a prophet's inspiration, which impressed so many minds with awe, and made them flee before Him. ¶ *Merchandise.* When this evil practice is repeated after this warning, Jesus says *of thieves.* Matt. xxi. 13. For they had then no excuse of ignorance to plead.

17. *It was written.* Ps. lxix. 9. They could not understand the act at the time. It seemed strange, and almost like a defiance of public authority. This traffic had been sanctioned by the priests. Jesus condemns their teachers in punishing the offenders. But after the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts ii.), the minds of the disciples were enlightened, and they discovered that Jesus was acting by the model of their greatest and most pious sovereign, David. It is agreed that David was a type of Christ. He as king was vicegerent. Christ was the true king of Israel. David said, *Thy house;* Jesus, *My Father's house.* ¶ *Hath eaten me up.* Hath taken entire possession of me; has hurried me beyond the usual bounds. Zeal is an ardent love, by which the mind is wrought up to great fervor in religion and contempt of common fears. From this verse we may note these facts: 1. That the disciples did not comprehend many things which they beheld until they had become *inspired.* Till that time they were simply learners and witnesses of facts. They show that they were too ignorant of the spiritual meaning of events at the time they were occurring to have either guided or forged them. 2. That the consent of rulers to an evil custom does not remove the guilt of the individuals who practise it. It was no excuse for these merchants and brokers, that the priests allowed this profane abuse of the temple; they, too, were guilty. So many may now take warning who are wont to plead the permission of laws, often made by wicked men, under which they profane the temple of their souls, by falsehood, and the arts of gain. 3. And we see that buildings sacred to religion are not to be used for profane and worldly purposes. They should be secluded from all carnal and profane uses, that the minds of the worshippers may feel an habitual reverence for Him who often meets with them there.

18. *Then answered.* The Jewish priests answered not the words perhaps, but the meaning of this action which evidently claimed for Jesus the right

to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

of a prophet. Or they answered the meaning of His words, "*My Father's house.*" ¶ *What sign.* It was usual for all prophets to manifest their power at the beginning of their course by some unmistakable proof that they were sent from God. This is a natural expectation, and approved by Jehovah, as we see in the case of Moses. Ex. iv. 1–9. For Moses was to propose to his people a *new* course of action, and required some striking signs of a Divine mission. But Jesus refuses to give a sign to these angry Jews, because in this cleansing of the temple, He only did that which was right and pious in itself. He did not introduce at the moment any new course of action. The temple was abused; He rectified the abuse. The act was its own proof, and is cited by the Fathers as a miracle. But why give a sign to show it right, when it was written by the prophets, "My house shall be called the *house of prayer*," not of merchandise. Is. lvi. 1. "Were signs necessary for His putting a stop to evil practices? Was not the having such zeal for the house of God the greatest sign of His virtue? They did not remember the prophecy, but asked for a sign; at once irritated at the loss of their base gains, and wishing to prevent Him from going further."—*St. Chrysostom.*

19. *Destroy this temple.* This is His reply to their demand for a sign, and in it is foretold the great sign of His life, the proof that He was Lord of the temple. Jesus could have done as they pretended to understand Him, when they brought this speech up as criminal upon His trial. Matt. xxvi. 61. He was able to raise the walls of the temple in a moment. But the words which are here used, are plainly expressive of an entirely different sense. Jesus says, "I will raise it again. The original word means, *I will bring it to life again*" (as the Latin *excitabo*), used of one rising from sleep or death. It was a perverse obstinacy in them to understand it of the dead stones and beams of a temple. It is supposed by some that Jesus pointed to His own body when He spake these words; but there is no ground for this fancy in the text. The words are of that prophetic cast, that they can be taken carnally, or spiritually, and to the pious and attentive hearer among the Jews by their very style they would show that some deeper meaning lay concealed in them. Lu. viii. 10. It was no great help to their meaning to point out His body, for the resurrection of that body, which was to be the sign, was not then understood by the Jews, nor did the disciples comprehend this speech till after that event. It is irksome to a pious mind to imagine that Jesus could in any manner deceive His hearers, and such passages as this are labored on by many such, with a vain effort to extenuate every obscurity. But Jesus certainly did, and it cannot be denied, teach men in *proverbs* or parables, that they might learn the truth if they would, or be ignorant of it, if they chose. John xvi. 25. And the Gospel is in like manner a savor of life or death to its different hearers. 2 Cor. ii. 14–16; Heb. iv. 2. The human body is called by *Christian writers* a *temple*, but *only* by them, and only after the descent of the holy Ghost. So that all such places are to no purpose, in explaining this text. It follows therefore that *this sign* which they demanded was really promised them, if they would have believed it, that they could see by the words used, perhaps by a gesture added to them, that there was a deep wisdom contained in the words. While they could only by perversity receive any injury from supposing that Jesus spake of the visible temple. He never conspired to destroy the temple, that He might show His power in rebuilding it. The Jewish prophets "*spake hieroglyphics*," as a learned man hath it. The Jewish rabbis could recognize the style of a prophet at once, and should have received these words into honest hearts. Jesus elsewhere calls this raising the temple of His body, the sign of the prophet Jonas. Matt.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the [a]temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples re-

[a] Col. 2. 9; Heb. 8. 2; 1 Cor. 3. 16; & 6. 19.

xii. 39. ¶ *I will raise it up.* This is the keynote to the passage. *Egeiro* (εγειρω, Vulg. excitabo) is used in the New Testament only of persons, nations, &c., i. e., of such things as have *life in them*, and may be excited to use it. Let us paraphrase these words: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will cause it to awake out of sleep, or to rise from the dead, or to lift itself up again," for it is certain that some sense of vital motion was contained in the word. We would on hearing such a speech from one whom we thought to be a remarkable personage, begin to ponder on its half-concealed meaning. If we honored him, we would be at pains to find it; if not, we would neglect it. Thus was it with the disciples on the one side, with the Pharisees on the other.

20. *Then said the Jews.* They understood Him carnally, being angry and heated. The spiritually-minded of His hearers, like the virgin in a similar case, "kept" the sayings which they understood not, in their hearts, and at length found grace to believe. ¶ *Forty and six years.* The temple which stood in our Lord's time had been built by Zorobabel, and thoroughly repaired by Herod the Great. See Matt. xxi. 12, Herod began his undertaking with the intention of making a new building. But the Jews, suspicious of him in all things, feared that he would destroy the temple without rebuilding it, and prevented it. He changed the whole substance of the structure by piecemeal. This he began sixteen years before the birth of Jesus, to which the thirty years of our Lord's life being added, the sum is forty-six. The main body of the work was finished in the first ten years, but the repairs and adornment had gone on with many interruptions. Then when the priests made this vaunting speech, the repairs were in progress in the cloisters which had been burned by the Romans under Labinus. It was true as a fact, that this time had been spent on the temple and its buildings, but not because it was needed. The temple of Solomon, a far grander and costlier pile, was finished in seven years and a half. The second temple was sadly inferior in size and beauty, "in comparison of it as nothing." The prophet Haggai foretold that which was here fulfilled, that "the Desire of all nations should fill this house with a glory by His presence, that the glory of this latter house should surpass in glory the silver and gold of the former. Hag. ii. 3–9. ¶ *Wilt thou.* This was impertinent or foolish. If they expected a sign, that desire would prompt them to demand it in some more reasonable shape. If they thought that Jesus shrunk from the test of giving them a sign of His mission as a prophet sent from God, which they propose, they should have denied His right to reform religion, and not cavilled on what seemed to them to be an impossible thing. Conscience told them that He was right, and they were enraged to be found wrong. From hate to Him they carried this scene in mind three years, till they could take revenge on Him for this public humiliation. Mark xv. 29.

22. *Risen from the dead.* After that event Jesus "opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." See Luke xxiv. 45. And after this the Holy Ghost fell on them, and led them into all truth, that is, all spiritual truth. John xvi. 13. Then the disciples perceived the harmony of the faith, and the meaning of Jesus in thus beginning His public ministry with announcing His death and resurrection, before which that earthly temple was to crumble and be laid low. ¶ *The Scripture.* The Old Testament. For there was no other Scripture written at

membered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

23 ¶ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast-*day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

a 1 Sam. 16. 7; 1 Chron. 28. 9; Acts 1. 24; Rev. 2. 23.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he [a]knew what was in man.

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the time. They understood how the Old Testament foretold the death and resurrection of Jesus. There are many such prophecies in it, which we can now understand. Ps. xvi. 10; see Acts ii. 27–32; xiii. 35–37. ¶ *The word, &c.* The prophecy of His death and resurrection. "Two things there were, in the mean time, very far removed from the comprehension of the Disciples; one the resurrection of our Lord's body; the other the great mystery that it was God who dwelt in that body."—*St. Chrys.* Three years later, under the very same circumstances and at this same feast, the Jews fulfilled this saying and crucified the Lord Jesus.

23. *Feast-day.* On some important day of the feast, when great numbers were assembled, or during the whole time of the Passover. The word *day* is not necessarily implied in the original Greek. ¶ *Many believed.* With the mind, not the heart. They confessed the bare proposition that He was a powerful Prophet and showed signs of the Messiah, and, provided the belief would have cost them nothing, would have followed on to higher trust. The Sower casts His seed freely; this is an instance of the faith springing by the way-side, or among thorns and rocks. Matt. xiii. 11, 12. ¶ *Miracles which He did.* Faith produced by miracles alone needs something more to make it active and true. One coming from the grave, or changing natural laws at will, or raising the sick and recalling the dead, we imagine would terrify us all into unhesitating faith; but it was not so with those who saw the startling miracles of the Saviour. Luke xvi. 31; 1 Cor. xiii. 2; Gal. v. 6. It is to be noted that the true disciples first believed without miracles. One may be arrested and convinced by a miracle, but the mind must pass beyond the miracle, from wonder to love. We have no occasion to regret our estate under the usual effects of the Gospel. They are sufficient to convince all. Miracles of grace, souls saved from sin by the truths and promises of the word, are sufficient proofs to teach a true faith.

24. *Did not commit Himself.* Literally, did not believe in them, or in their faith being sound. They were probably ambitious to be His disciples and join His cause. But He knew them to be unfit instruments for His spiritual work.

25. *Should testify of man.* He needed no information of the weakness and fickleness of such popularity as He then had: but quietly returned to Galilee. ¶ *Knew what was in man.* God alone knows the hearts of all the children of men. 1 Kings viii. 39; Ps. xxxiii. 15. We can only know the thoughts of others by their words and actions. But Jesus had no need of such things. He saw into the hearts of all men; often answered them unexpectedly, often predicted their future actions, as in the case of Peter. This knowledge is too wonderful for the human mind. It is the possession and mark of God alone, who dwelt in the Person of the Lord Jesus. He knew the shallowness of the professions which were made to Him at this time. He could recognise, under a remote fig-tree, the guilelessness of a Nathanael. Blessed thought, that while we may at times tremble before the Eye that can pierce into our most secret thoughts, and discover the faults and sin in them, it still sees that we are but dust and ashes; has pity on us, recognizes the faintest aspiration for goodness

CHAPTER III.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, [a]except God be with him.

a Acts 10. 38.

and truth, cherishes and approves a true faith, and warms into life "the smoking flax" of a sincere penitence. Says Grotius: "Jesus did not commit Himself to men, but returned unto Galilee, for He saw that they were not so filled with love for Him, as to be willing to undergo danger or shame for His sake. Their knowledge was not based upon a mind grounded on a sincere love of piety, and could not withstand the dangers which threatened Him. Therefore in the next verses the coming of Nicodemus *by night* is narrated.

CHAPTER III.

1. *A man of the Pharisees.* One of the Pharisees. See note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.* He was a member of the Sanhedrim or great council of the nation (ch. vii. 50), and afterwards became a true disciple of Jesus. xix. 39. The Sanhedrim had been much moved by the events already related, and this public discussion sets Nicodemus on to visit Jesus, that he may learn His intentions from His own lips. This was near the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, when men understood very little of His claims.

2. *The same came to Jesus.* St. John relates this conversation minutely, as it explains some of the great doctrines of the Gospel as they were declared from the first. While the Jewish rulers were hostile to Jesus, this one, impelled by an earnest desire to know the truth of His mission, came to Him; did not rest satisfied with hearing and seeing His public works, but sought Him out to learn the more exact forms of His doctrines. Nicodemus probably supposed that Jesus had some secret doctrines which He taught His disciples privately, and he sought to know something of these. ¶ *By night.* He has been harshly judged by some preachers for this manner and time of coming. His prudence is rather to be praised, who came upon a *doubt*, in order to learn the truth. He was a ruler, a teacher in Israel. Should he say to his friends and followers, "I have a doubt that this is the Messiah; I will go to Him and learn more of Him;" or shall he not privately inquire of Him concerning His doctrine, and satisfy himself of His claims? One circumstance has misled these critics. Nicodemus did not become an *immediate* disciple of Jesus. Few men did, even of His friends. Jesus chose twelve disciples, and afterwards seventy others; but He left all other believers in Him to pursue their usual employments, and to continue their former lives as pious Jews, only with better hopes and motives. If He had called all men off from their usual business, He would have excited instant opposition from the government and Sanhedrim, and left us a far different example, who follow Him since His ascension. So that Zaccheus, Joseph of Arimathea, Nathanael, Nicodemus, Lazarus, his sisters, and others, were left to adorn the Christian faith in the common duties of piety, as devout Jews. Now, 1. Our Lord does not rebuke Nicodemus for this manner of coming. Why must we? 2. St. John mentions him twice after this; both times favorably (vii. 50; xix. 39), and both times as "he that came to Jesus by night." Would the Evangelist have left it as a sneer or stigma upon him? Is there such a thing as one ambiguous mark on individual character in the Gospels? 3. The early Christians only marked him as *timid*, not hypocritical or insincere. Says St. Austin: "Nicodemus was one of the number who believed, but were not yet born again. Therefore he came to Jesus by night." Every man should seek for truth honestly, according to the desire which he has for it. Let him go

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be [a]born [‖]again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him,

[a] Gal. 6. 16; Tit. 3. 5; Jas. 1. 18; 1 Pet. 1. 23; 1 John 3. 9.

‖ Or, *from above.*

by night, if it must be. We may rejoice that this man went even by night, for his doubts have left a full answer to all such questions as beset the mind on hearing seriously the truths of the Gospel. Jesus has mercy and tenderness for all, to give to all men such truth as may lead them to eternal life. He taught the crowd of the unlearned in *parables*, but instructed this learned Jew in the higher mysteries of Christian doctrine. ¶ *Rabbi.* Master! Teacher! A term of respect founded on what Nicodemus knew of Jesus, namely, that He was a prophetic teacher, that he had unfolded great truths and sustained them by wonderful works. This was all he knew. This was all that Jesus had yet taught, for Jesus had not yet declared openly certain truths which were afterwards revealed; and on this knowledge he addresses Him. ¶ *We know.* Or, it is known, or evident to all men. This mode of speaking is familiar to all. It is beyond all doubt that the works of Jesus had convinced the minds of all the thoughtful Jews from the first that He was the Messiah. So that they were inexcusable in their opposition to Him. ¶ *Come from God.* A very important admission, since by the common interpretation of their prophets, they all confessed that the next prophet who was sent by God would be either Elias or the Messiah. See Mal. iv. 5, 6; John i. 21, 22. It is upon this admission that Jesus replies, and His reply is seen to be appropriate only by such a view. For a master in Israel knew well what the admission signified. ¶ *These miracles.* Those which He did in Jerusalem. Ch. ii. 23. ¶ *Except God be with him.* Nicodemus reasoned as a Jew. For, 1. His own Scriptures taught him that no man could work miracles truly unless God was with him to assist him therein. 2. That the ancient prophets were accustomed to work miracles as a proof that they were sent from God. Ex. iv. 5, 8, 9; 1 Kings xviii. 24. 3. He reasoned carnally and not spiritually, by intellect and not faith; for he as yet is not born again, nor can see that Jesus is something more than a prophet and rabbi; that he is Lord of all things. 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.

3. *Verily, verily.* Amen, amen, i. e. Truth, truth; intending to warn the hearer that what is now said is of the last importance, and must be reverently received and weighed. Hence we conclude that our Lord intended to remove the perplexity of Nicodemus, and that He is here uttering a solemn truth of importance, not to him only, but to all men. Now Nicodemus had confessed that Jesus was a prophet, and hence was perplexed to know if he was *the* Prophet, either the forerunner or the Messiah. He was in doubt. But he was reasoning *carnally*, that is, by the letter, of a temporal prince and kingdom, of Jerusalem as the central metropolis of a universal conqueror, and other such views, as the disciples and others so often manifested afterwards. To clear these doubts, Jesus assures him that he must be changed and regenerated by the Spirit of God, in order to see the truth. As if He had said: "You allow Me to be a prophet. You know that on the appearing of the next prophet, the kingdom of God, 'the great and terrible day of the Lord' (Mal. iv. 5, 6), will come. And you are perplexed about certain marks about Me, My poverty, humility, and My refusing temporal power. Now, know certainly, that unless you have light from God you cannot see the kingdom of God; you cannot put away your ambitious views and see the spiritual character of that kingdom." The very disciples could not see that kingdom of grace, till they were born again on the day of Pentecost, as related Acts ii. See Acts i. 6; John

How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

xvi. 4, 7, and 13. ¶ *Except a man.* There can be no exception to this rule. No one can see the spiritual kingdom of Christ, in its true sense, unless he partakes of His Spirit, since that kingdom is "not of this world," as all others are, but is *within us.* Compare John xviii. 36, Luke xvii. 20, 21, and 1 Cor. ii. 14. Hence the design is to call off Nicodemus from those carnal reasonings then in his mind, and to prepare him to wait for that new law which was to rule the Messianic kingdom, and to learn the rudiments of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17. ¶ *Be born again.* Pass through such a change of his spiritual nature as natural birth is of his physical. For at birth we come from darkness to light, from a mere animal state to the beginning of the use of our faculties, from a state of deadness to the activity of breath and life. So the natural man must be regenerate, and pass from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, from mere knowledge of the laws of God to faith, forgiveness, and hope in Christ; to the beginning of all the graces of the Holy Spirit. Now it is to be noted here that Jesus speaks only of this *change*, without deciding any thing of the previous condition, beyond the necessity of some spiritual change. Hence he does not give us any positive doctrine as to the degree of human depravity, but only declares that all men must pass through a change of condition, in order to perceive the truth of the spiritual power of the kingdom of Christ. For as no one can tell what a *feeling* is until he has felt it, nor what light is until he sees it, so man by nature is very far gone from righteousness, and has no idea of the Spirit's power until he receives the gracious habits of its production, nor can discern the work of God in himself till he has signs of that change of state, in a change of heart and affections, which marks him for a new creature. Therefore "all men are conceived and born in sin (and that which is born of the flesh is flesh), and they who are in the flesh *cannot please God*, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions." God alone can give such "that which by nature they cannot have," namely, "the mystical washing away of sin," "deliverance from His wrath, reception into the ark of Christ's Church, and steadfast faith, joy, and hope." This change is the gift of God, by the Holy Ghost, not of ourselves nor by our merits, but by the redemption which is provided in Christ. It is the new birth of the Spirit, or regeneration, taught again in Titus iii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 3, 19, 20, 23. This new law was foretold in many noble prophecies of the Old Testament. Jer. xxxi. 31–34; Ez. xi. 19; xxxvi. 25–28; Heb. viii. 6 to end. ¶ *He cannot see.* In the best sense, to understand and enter into it. It was about this kingdom that Nicodemus came to ask. He can see it only by a new birth, i. e., see it as he desired, enter it, and enjoy the advantages of it. So when our Lord repeats His assertion, He uses the synonymous words, *cannot enter.* This was an humbling doctrine for a Jew, who thought that his own nation were in every sense members of God's kingdom, and being once born of Abraham, had no need of another change. But their prophets had taught them better; that in the Messiah's days they should have a new spirit and a heart of flesh, that is, a tender and spiritual love for God and His righteousness.

4. *How can a man, &c.* This was not a strange question from such a man. For, 1. He was a Jew and needed spiritual instruction. He took the words in their first meaning, not supposing that Jesus could mean them of natural birth, which involved absurdities, but asking Him by this form of question, *in what sense* this "verily, verily" could be true. "He objects to the doctrine," says St. Chrysostom, "*in order to call forth a fuller explanation.*" This was a common custom in the Jewish

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, [a]Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the

a Mark 16. 16; Acts 1. 5; & 2. 38.

schools, for their rabbis were wont to involve their instructions at times in dark sayings in order to excite the examination and questions of their hearers. Two things are dark to Nicodemus here, the kingdom and the new birth. He requires an explanation of the latter, which would involve one of the former. 2. The words *new birth, born again* and such like, were common among the Jews to describe the change of a proselyte from heathenism to Judaism. But as the Jews looked for no other covenant than that to which they would have a right by natural birth, so they could ill bear to hear of such a law of admission. For if all must be born again to become members of Christ's kingdom, then all men, Jews and Gentiles, were put on the same footing. This was new language, and to them sounded as strange as this question of Nicodemus does to us. That this was language hard to be understood at that time is plain now from two facts. 1. That the *birth of the Spirit* is made necessary for understanding the full force of the words themselves which describe it. 1 Cor. ii. 11–16. 2. That the disciples who followed Jesus did not understand His kingdom in the spiritual sense for lack of the same new-birth; for as one of them has recorded, "*the Spirit was not yet given: because that Jesus was not yet glorified*," that is, that Spirit which "they that believe on Him (Christians generally) should receive." John vii. 39. ¶ *Is old.* Or being old, as Nicodemus was then. He is thinking of his own chance of entering that kingdom. Jesus speaks and provides for all men: the penitent first seeks mercy for himself, as here he seems to urge, "I am an old man, and would be saved and obey the Messiah. Must I be born again in the natural way to do it?" We pity the man who can suppose that Nicodemus was a trifler.

5. *Be born of water.* Be born again in baptism. Not that water can save us, which is only the "putting away of the filth of the flesh," but still baptism now saves us, by the inward answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 21. This inward answer is plainly described by the same Apostle, Acts ii. 38: "*Repent and be baptized*, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And the same by St. Philip (Acts viii. 37): "And Philip said, If thou *believest with all thine heart*, thou mayest (be baptized). And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." For the great commission of the Gospel is to baptize all. "He *that believeth* and is baptized shall be saved." Mark xvi. 16 So St. Paul calls it "the laver of regeneration" (Titus iii. 5), and "the washing of water by the word." Eph. v. 26. Ananias exhorted Paul himself to baptism with these words: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized *and wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii. 16. And that Apostle ever taught that "as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27), that "they were baptized into His death and buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so should we also *walk in newness of life*." Rom. vi. 3-6. From these and similar passages concerning this subject we learn that all who come to baptism "truly repenting and coming unto Christ by faith, do receive in baptism by water and the Holy Ghost," remission of their sins, the bestowing of the Holy Ghost, the blessing of eternal life and a right to participation in His everlasting kingdom." That "being born again, they are made heirs of everlasting salvation." That in this sacrament, God's

flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born ‖ again.

‖ Or, *from above.*

promises are "most surely kept and performed," that they are conditionated on man's previous faith and repentance and succeeding obedience; that hence baptism represents unto us our profession (and stretches through the whole Christian life) which is to follow Christ and to be made like unto Him, in newness of spiritual life. "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a *sign of regeneration* or new birth, whereby as by an *instrument they who receive baptism rightly* are grafted into the Church," &c. *Art. XXVII.* See note, Matt. xix. 14. ¶ *And of the Spirit.* Not by water only, for baptism is not a charm or magic rite; not by the Spirit only, for it is a sacrament. Therefore God has united the two, so that while no one man who fulfils his part of the covenant can doubt of the certainty of his acceptance, God's Spirit shall not be profaned by the wickedness of those who receive baptism unrighteously. Simon Magus, though baptized, was in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity, not his original state by nature only, but in a condition more dreadful, having profaned the holy covenant of God. He had neither part nor lot in the Gospel covenant, for his heart was not right in the sight of God. Acts viii. 18–24. ¶ *Kingdom of God.* The Church here and hereafter.

6. *That which is born of the flesh.* This is the direct answer to the question of Nicodemus. "You object that it is difficult to conceive of the flesh or body being born a second time. It is so, for that which is born of the flesh, is the body, subject to the laws of matter, time and space, and once made and grown to age, cannot return to its infant condition. Your objection is just. But set it aside. I am speaking only of the spirit, not of the flesh." That a change from a natural state is necessary, the Apostles teach us at large, and they call the natural state of man often by the word *flesh.* But this is a Christian use, arising after the descent of the Spirit had made the two states (flesh and spirit) familiar to the Christian world. ¶ *Is flesh.* Not is corrupt, though that is true, but is flesh, i e., subject to such natural laws as prevent its being born a second time from the womb. Flesh is not used in the Scriptures of which Nicodemus knew any thing in any other sense. And we must limit one's power of understanding by the familiar use of language at his time. ¶ *Is born of the Spirit is spirit.* It is man's soul, his spiritual nature, in which the change passes by the power of the Spirit of God. In this important passage it is necessary to the right understanding of this doctrine, to make this contrast definite, to draw it between the flesh and the soul, which was the subject of the question. Other *inferences* may then follow. But let not inferences here or elsewhere darken the evident assertions of Scripture. Our Lord says not, it is spiritual, i. e., holy and pure, but *it is spirit*, it is a spiritual substance. It is man's inner nature which admits of a total change, a new birth. 1 John ii. 29; v. i. Hence we learn that, 1. Man in every condition of life needs this gracious change into a new state or condition, of acceptance in the Gospel covenant, here called the kingdom of God, now generally called the Church. 2. That he receives this by a work of regeneration, which is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. 3. That this change transplants him into the state of salvation. 4. That this entrance into the covenant by a spiritual change, is fixed by the Lord Jesus to the sacrament of Baptism. It is required therefore of persons to be baptized, that they have "repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament." And with this repentance and faith they receive the inward and spiritual grace,

8 The [a]wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

[a] Ec. 11. 5; 1 Cor. 2. 11.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

namely, "a death unto sin, a new birth unto righteousness, and are made the children of Grace." *See Catechism.* Without faith they do not receive the new birth, nor spiritual life.

8. *The wind, &c.* "You do not understand this spiritual doctrine, neither do you comprehend the natural mystery of the wind. But as you only ask of the wind pure air to inflate your lungs and keep you alive, so you must also in this case, obey and use the gift of the Spirit, leaving that which is mysterious in it to a future life." It was night. The wind was heard probably in the street. Jesus uses the natural agent which of all others is nearest allied in our conceptions to spiritual power, to illustrate the *fact* of the new birth, and give a reason for His not revealing the *manner* of it. Nicodemus asked *how.* To this there is not only no reply, but a plain instruction is here given that there *can be none* in our present life. The wind in the Hebrew is the word which is used also for Spirit, *Ruach:* so that the passage reads "the spirit (wind) bloweth, &c. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." So that St. Augustine and others deny that there is any mention of wind in the verse. But we think otherwise. For Jesus is warning Nicodemus not to stumble at the mysterious, when the plain is of vital importance, not to marvel at the *How* and refuse the new birth. ¶ *Where it listeth.* Where it wills. Not that the wind is not subject to natural laws, but that it seems free from the laws which confine the grosser matter of the human system. It goes and then returns to its place, at will apparently. Ezek. xxxvii. 9. ¶ *So is every one born of the Spirit.* Thus it is in the operations of the spiritual regeneration, it moves not by such laws as you had in mind in asking the question. Believe, therefore, that the *fact* is possible and certain, though the manner is inscrutable. See ch. i. 13.

9. *How can these things be?* An expression of pleased surprise mingled with doubt. He does not deny, but confesses it all above him, and asks for further instruction. If we conceive of Nicodemus as a trifling or proud Pharisee, then he would have said, These things cannot be; but he asks now, as a true learner, listening to subjects sublime and overwhelming, "How can these things be?" and as if he was an honest disciple our Lord proceeds to instruct him in truths yet more profound. What Christian now, but rises often from the view of Scripture truth with this same feeling; not doubting, but astonished and charmed by the "depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Nicodemus was thought worthy of further teaching. He afterward stood at the cross, and probably learned with the rest of the disciples on the day of Pentecost, not how, but how surely these things are in a heart which loves and confides in the One sent from God.

10. *A master of Israel.* A teacher of the Old Testament. Do not your own Scriptures teach you enough of the facts of this new law which is to be established in the Messianic covenant? Jer. xxxi. 31; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. The Mosaic law also had its washings. Heb. ix. 10; x. 1, 22. These typified the future perfect ordinances of the Gospel. And there were many events of the Old Testament history, which plainly pointed out the truth of this change of heart and moral state. Some of these the Apostles allude to. See 1 Cor. x. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 20. And Nicodemus must have been familiar with the

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

usual mode of receiving proselytes from the Gentiles into the Jewish Church, by baptism. For such were taught by language which is very similar to this, that they were therein born to a new life, and received new rules and principles of living. Nicodemus might therefore, but for his pride as a Jew in the letter of his covenant, have applied this language to himself. This national pride was the stumbling-block of all the hearers of our Lord, during His whole ministry. John viii. 33.

11. *We speak that We do know.* The plural is put in for the singular number, or perhaps for those who were engaged in this preaching of the kingdom of God, Himself and John the son of Zacharias. Others will have it that the plural signifies the Trinity, who alone can have this perfect knowledge. But hardly so, for the chief design of our Lord seems to be this,—to assure Nicodemus that He had the perfect knowledge of that which He taught. Other prophets had said, "Thus saith the Lord," or "The word of the Lord came unto me." Jesus, a prophet in Nicodemus's view, uses no such words, but in place thereof, "We speak that We do know." He therefore puts His own claim to inspiration far above the Jewish prophets. Verse 34; and ch. iv. 22; v. 19–23. This is a worthy *preface* to the sublime truths which follow. For He who reveals heavenly things truly, must have them from God. This our Lord here declares that He did, by a method unusual, by a direct and constant vision. ¶ *That which We have seen.* "Sight we consider is the most certain of all the senses; so that when we say, we saw such a thing with our eyes, we seem to compel men to believe us. In like manner Christ, speaking after the manner of men, does not indeed say that He had seen actually, i. e., with the bodily eyes, the mysteries He reveals, but it is clear that He means it of the most *certain, absolute knowledge.* This, then, He asserts of Himself alone."—*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *Ye receive not.* Ye Jewish masters and Pharisees. This is said rather of the class to which Nicodemus belonged, than of himself. ¶ *Our witness.* The testimony given to truth, by miracles and preaching and clear reasons, drawn from ancient prophecies. Miracles attended the beginning of the Christian dispensation (as also the Jewish), to call the attention of men to its truth and power. When that was done effectually, they ceased.

12. *If I have told you earthly things.* Things which happen on the earth, regeneration and the effects of it. These things are in a measure more easily known than those which follow. For we see the results which follow on them, and again, being matters of practical experience, we have the testimony of others, both in words and in their works. ¶ *Believe not.* Find them strange and incredible. He who only wonders, does not believe, for faith is a willing and trusting assent to truth, and is based on a firm conviction. But this hearer had not denied, but only wondered. Therefore Jesus goes on to instruct him further, that he may ponder on these things and become wise unto salvation. ¶ *Heavenly things.* Doctrines of a celestial nature. Such are those which follow, namely, the eternal generation of the Son of God (v. 13), the atonement, (14), the righteousness of faith (15, 16); salvation by the death of Christ, and faith in Him and the removal of the condemnation of men by Him, to verse 21. These are beyond our comprehension. For though we believe the historical facts and the doctrines which they show forth, and the duties which they require of us, we must still, the wisest of us, say, with the inspired Apostle: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* [a]the Son of man which is in heaven.

a Ch. 6. 33, 38, 51, 62; & 16. 28; Eph. 4. 9, 10.

14 ¶ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

His judgments, and His ways past finding out." Rom. xi. 33. But it is the mercy of God to us, that we can believe when reason fails, and hope when we cannot see.

13. *And no man hath ascended up to heaven.* This *and* means rather *to wit*, this is one of the celestial things; the *eternal generation* or pre-existence of the Son of God. For this is the sum of the words. No man hath ascended into heaven to learn the will of God, and return it to earth; but He only who has come down from heaven (by the incarnation), and yet still in His Divine nature dwells in heaven." For thus Archbishop Tillotson: "In this verse the Son is said to have come down from heaven, in respect of the union of His Divinity with the human nature, and His special residence in it here below; and yet He is said to be still in heaven, in respect of His Divinity, by which He is every where present." This declaration is not only a *heavenly thing*, that is, a truth in the knowledge of the Divine nature, but is also the ground of the faith of every Christian who believes in the words of the Saviour as truly the words of God. ¶ *Came down from heaven.* See John i. 14; Phil. iii. 6, 7. This is related in the narrative of Luke (i. 31), 35, and Matthew i. 23; Is. vii. 14. Jesus, the Son of man, had no father but God, and hence partook of the Divine nature by original generation, and not at the incarnation, but from eternity. John xvii. 5. ¶ *Which is in heaven.* The simple meaning of the words is the true one. Jesus, the Son of man, was then in bodily presence conversing with Nicodemus, but as to His superior nature He inhabiteth eternity. Now this doctrine was not so strange to Nicodemus that he should stumble at it. For the learned show us, by many proofs, that the shadowy outlines of it were even then conceived and expressed by the Jewish saints. John v. 46; viii. 56. And no one can understand this Gospel, as the universal Church in all ages has understood it, except by holding fast to these two articles of faith, once delivered to the saints, the perfect Humanity and the perfect Divinity of Christ in one person to reveal and provide the way of salvation.

14. *And as Moses.* To wit, as Moses, &c. This is the second truth in the list of heavenly things, the *atonement.* Moses was a type of Christ, and in many of his actions with the Israelites prefigured His coming. In the act which is here referred to we can see the resemblance. The Israelites were dying by fiery serpents. Moses by Divine command made an effigy in brass and suspended it in the camp, that all might look on it and live. Numb. xxi. 8, 9. So the souls of men are ruined by the sting of death which is sin; the sting of that old serpent, the devil. Christ has been lifted up, that by His death on the cross a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world should be made, and all who believe in Him have eternal life. ¶ *Lifted up.* He does not say *put to death.* John viii. 28. For this fact was not declared in plain words, until His last going up to Jerusalem. Matt. xx. 17–19. It is implied, as we can now see, in the words lifted up. ¶ *The serpent.* That of brass, which Moses made. ¶ *The wilderness.* As the people "journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the sea to compass the land of Edom" or Idumæa. Numb. xxi. 4. It is the dry, sandy region to the south-east of Palestine. ¶ *Son of man.* That is Christ in His *human nature;* in His Divine nature He could not suffer. He suffered as man, and became a curse for man, the just for the unjust: was made sin or the sacrifice for sin, that

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 ¶ For [a]God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-

[a] Rom. 5. 8; 1 John 4. 9.

He might through His own death redeem those, who were all their life long subject to bondage, and thus become a High Priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, a captain of our salvation, being Himself made perfect by suffering. Gal. iii. 13; 1 Peter iii. 18; 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. ii. 10, 14, 15; iv. 15.

15. *That whosoever.* This language manifests the universality of redemption. It was made for all who will choose it. There are none born of Adam who have not an interest in it. For God so loved, not a few, but the *world*, that all might have this privilege. The Old Testament had it by a retrospective power of the death of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; heathen saints (and such there are) have it by a right faith in the infinite mercy of God, "which was manifest in them," and true repentance on their thoughts accusing and condemning them. Rom. i. 19, 20, ii. 14, 15. ¶ *Believeth in Him.* Believe according to the covenant of the Gospel. This all may do who will. They, therefore, who do it not are without excuse. ¶ *Should not perish.* Perish eternally, for it is opposed to eternal life. This doctrine was a hard one to Nicodemus, who came expecting to hear of salvation for the Jews and a royal kingdom. He now hears that neither birth from Abraham, nor Mosaic circumcision availeth any thing, but a new birth of the Spirit and a new creation avail by faith. And he is warned that all men are in danger of perishing by sin, that all need to look to this Saviour for their salvation. The Gospel reveals everlasting destruction and also everlasting life. The one threatened to all who sin; the other as free to all who believe.

16. *For God so loved the world.* This shows the intensity of that Divine Love which is made the rule of Christian actions in the Church. "Herein is love (the greatest revelation and proof of it), not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John iv. 7, 10, 11; and iii. 11. That this love transcends our conception is abundantly evident. But it is made a subject of contemplation till we too feel it and live by it. "The highest instance and testimony of God's love to us, is our redemption from sin and eternal death, by the blood of His only Son; and as the most effectual way to raise and cherish a suitable return of love towards Him in our hearts, we should frequently commemorate our redemption by attending the holy sacrament. For in this sacred rite the love of God is set before us in so sensible and affecting a manner, as cannot fail to engage all those to a proper return of love and obedience, who by often repeating this memorial of His mercy and goodness, keep up in their hearts a lively sense of their unspeakable obligations towards Him."—*Bp. Gibson.* ¶ *The world.* Not any select or chosen few, not the seed of Abraham only, but all mankind; so that in all ages, races and dispensations, there has in Christ been provided a way of escape from sin and death. Heb. ii. 9; 2 Cor. v. 15. Thus we say, "God the Son who redeemed us and all mankind." But they who refuse the conditions of salvation of course lose the benefit. ¶ *His only begotten Son.* See note, ch. i. 14. God gave that which was dearest and nearest to Him. Our Lord suffered as man. By the nature which He had in common with us, was our salvation effected. For as God He cannot suffer. But by the union of His natures He is the Almighty Saviour, the all prevailing Advocate and High Priest of the human race. There is an allusion here to Gen. xxii. 12. Abraham offering his "son, his only son," was a type of this mercy of the Infinite Father, sending Christ to be a propitiation for sin. 1 John ii. 12.

lieveth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 [a]For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

a 1 John 4. 14.

18 ¶ He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

17. *To condemn the world.* He was not sent in this first coming to judge and punish the race of Adam, although in some prophecies of the Old Testament this character had been given to the Messiah. He came first to save it, to offer the last great dispensation and covenant of mercy, to try mankind whether they would accept eternal life, as a free gift. But the same Lord Jesus must come again to fulfil those prophecies and to judge both the quick and the dead. Now He offers salvation by infinite mercy to all men who hear and obey the Gospel. Then He will punish the wicked for all their ungodly deeds. ¶ *The world.* Opposed to the favorite notion of the Jews, that they only who were the seed of Abraham could be the objects of God's love. Jesus begins to signify to this learned rabbi, what was after a while taught more plainly, the free offer of grace to all nations and races.

18. *He that believeth.* Believes and does all that such a faith requires. To believe in Christ for spiritual profit, is not only to confess Him to be a Prophet and Messiah, and profess confidence in Him as sent from God, but to do all that that faith requires, according to the best knowledge of the individual. It is the first part of the covenant that we believe, but we believe to some purpose only when we repent and forsake sin, and determine to cast all our confidence on the atonement of Jesus, and lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking thenceforth in His most holy ways. So that the faith which justifies and saves is "the faith which works by love." Gal. v. 6. But such is the mercy of God, in the Gospel, that the penitent man may expel the horrid fear of eternal punishment from the moment that he sincerely believes and resolves to trust his all to the merciful Saviour of sinners. ¶ *He that believeth not.* This was necessary to be added; for while Christ died for all men, yet all are not saved. For He died that all might be saved who would perform the conditions of His covenant. They, therefore, who do not perform these terms, are not saved by Him. No Jew could think to reject Him and be safe. There was no middle ground left for them. So that the sentence teaches us in addition, that if not saved by Him, they and we cannot be saved in any other manner. Acts iv. 12. ¶ *Is condemned already.* For the Scripture has concluded *all under sin.* Gal. iii. 22. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every mouth is stopped and the whole world become guilty before God." Rom. iii. 19–23. And this is as evident in looking out upon the world, and in at our own hearts, as it is on the holy page; so that all teach us, that they who refuse the gift of faith are already in a state of sin, and merit condemnation. ¶ *Because.* This confines these terms of judgment to those who hear the Gospel, for they only can be condemned by this refusal to believe. Others are tried, condemned or pardoned by the grace provided in Christ, according to the covenant under which they live. Rom. ii. 12–16. The Gospel deals altogether with the hearers of it, for they are to learn from it not so much "if few be saved," as how to work out their own salvation. The right understanding of this text cuts off all trifling excuses, of sinning little, or doing no harm, and such like. For God sees in us an *evil heart of unbelief*, and the condemnation is already issued. Our work is to *escape* from it, to flee to the city of refuge, and take care that the sentence be reversed.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than [a]light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be [‖]reproved.

a Eph. 5. 13, 14. ‖ Or, *discovered.*

19. *This is the condemnation.* This is the ground or just cause of it, that men in heart are beforehand opposed to the truth. The coming of Christ does not create the guilt, but the guilt was before incurred, in the fact that men hated the light. The rising of the sun does not create the pain of one whose eyes are diseased, though it may increase it, or bring it to his knowledge for the first time. The eyes were diseased before. It only reveals the infirmity, and aggravates its pain. So men were; yea, most knew themselves to be guilty and hating the truth before; the words of Christ only made this sinful state more plain. ¶ *That light is come.* Light is put for that which instructs men in the will of God, and the duties of religion, and on the other hand also in the evils of sin. Eph. v. 13. As Jesus did this in the highest degree, so is He called the light, revealing in its perfection the truth of God. John i. 8, 9; viii. 12; and xii. 35. So John in his sphere was called "a burning and a shining light" (John v. 35), that is, a light *kindled on earth*, but Jesus a sun, and a prime source of light. Mal. iv. 2. ¶ *Men loved darkness.* That natural state of the soul wherein it forgets God, breaks His laws, and loses sight of His will, and hates truth and hates man made in His image, as it is the worst and most fatal kind of ignorance, and brings a man sorrow here and misery hereafter, is called in Scripture, *darkness.* 1 John ii. 11. The punishment of it, St. Peter terms "chains of darkness." 2 Epis. ii. 4. The crimes of such are "works of darkness," and the final end of it, the "blackness of darkness for ever." Eph. v. 11; Jude 13. It is not ignorance of the mind, for one may know very little of human knowledge, and yet be full of light and peace, but it is that dark unbelief and groping stupidity of the affections, when men hate goodness, and love to do wrong. ¶ *Their deeds were evil.* They are so committed to all evil customs and vices, even as the Pharisees were, that they actually hate the truth. Two kinds of infidels are still seen in the world. 1. The prattlers, who love to forge some fanciful cavil against religion, in order to avoid being Christians, to which their consciences or the faithful exhortations of others prompt them. They are seldom in earnest. 2. Those hardened, blackened souls, who having been sinners in youth, vain and vicious in manhood, are at last so bound to their depravity that, seeing no good in themselves, they *cannot* believe it to exist in others. The former class often recruit the latter, as they who sport on the edge of an abyss are often dashed to pieces in its depths. But without the grace of God preventing, this would be the miserable condition of all men.

20. *Every one that doeth evil.* Wicked men who are accustomed to do wrong, and gain earthly ends by it. ¶ *Hateth the light.* The Pharisees were notorious examples of this. They saw, and could not plausibly deny the truth. It was like light pressing all around them. They must see it, but they would lose by it, all their gains, their power, their dear sins, and seeing or not seeing, they refused and hated it, and Him who brought it. John ix. 40, 41. ¶ *His deeds should be reproved.* Not reproved merely in words, but shown to be wicked and dangerous. The Pharisees had many false excuses by which to bolster up their corruptions. They knew well how to soothe conscience, and to practise a large hypocrisy. But Jesus tore off the veil from the conscience, and laid bare their sins and their punishment. So is it always with the wicked. Religion comes down into their favorite excuses, and refuges of lies, and cuts down their vain hopes, and shows them

21 But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

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that they are lost and undone. They are unwilling to give up their sins, and they say of it as the devils to Jesus, "Why hast thou come to torment us before the time?" Religion comes to them in mercy, even as with Jesus, who came to cure the man possessed, and bring him to sit at his feet, clothed and in his right mind.

21. *He that doeth truth.* Or that which the truth teaches: the works of truth are here opposed to the deeds of evil above. And it is elegantly put, the abstract for the concrete, for the true works are like *truth*, spiritual, salutary and eternal. So Christ calls Himself, not a true one, but *the truth*. John xiv. 6. His Gospel is "the truth," His Spirit, the Spirit of truth; His word is truth, His disciples are of the truth. Thus St. John uses this word affectionately, as if his pure mind loved to behold all the parts of the Gospel, and the Church as partaking of the changeless pure substance of the Son of God. It was a Hebrew use of the word truth, put in the Old Testament for righteousness, goodness and the like. ¶ *Cometh to the light.* Acts openly; seeks farther truth, and always aspires to be possessed of a conscience void of offence. Such an one comes to Christ as the true light, that he may know all that concerns his salvation. See 1 Thess. v. 5, 8. ¶ *May be made manifest.* That God may see that his heart is right, that men may see that he labors to do right, and that he may himself be assured that he is in the way of righteousness. Matt. v. 16; 1 John iii. 21. ¶ *Wrought in God.* Says St. Augustine: "Thou art come to the light, because this very sin in thee, which displeaseth thee, would not displease thee, did *not God shine upon thee, and His truth show it unto thee.*" For the origin of the spiritual knowledge by which we see and love the works of holiness, is given by the Holy Spirit. If that deserts any man, then is he given up to work all uncleanness. They, then, who are here spoken of are saints, as tracing all their works back to faith in God, have sought His help, have rejoiced in His grace, and give all glory to Him for whatever in them is of a nature to be made manifest. Said St. Paul, "I also labor, *striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.*" Col. i. 29; Eph. iii. 20; 1 Thess. ii. 13. Here ends the discourse with Nicodemus. It is remarkable as to the time when it was uttered. It was early in our Lord's ministry. These same sublime truths were spoken to the multitude in parables, to the disciples, more plainly, but only by degrees as they could bear them. It is noteworthy, that Jesus here taught them to Nicodemus at once, in language unadorned. We may believe that He did this in mercy to a learned and inquiring rabbi. He gave him the outline of the Gospel, that He might set his mind on working to study the Scriptures, and prepare him for a future blessing with His humbler followers. Nicodemus was always the friend of Jesus. Though not deserting his station (and why should he?) he spake up for Him in the Sanhedrim, and bore a part in the sad scenes which followed the crucifixion.

22. *Land of Judea.* Jesus left the city as soon as the Passover was ended, and went into the country near the Jordan, where He taught and made disciples. ¶ *And baptized.* He Himself, did not administer this preparatory rite (John iv. 2), for Christian baptism in its fulness began on the day of the coming of the Comforter. Acts ii. 42, 38. Men are said to do things, when they command them or oversee the doing. Solomon built the temple, i. e., he commanded and provided for its construction.

23. *In Ænon.* The word means, *a place of springs.* It was probably not a

23 ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to [b]Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

a 1 Sam. 9. 4.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews, about purifying.

town, but only a spot favorable for the purpose of baptism. It is thought to have been a place on the west side of Jordan, in Samaria, about eight miles south of Scythopolis. ¶ *Salim.* A small town. Both these sites are now subjects of conjecture. John the Baptist had "decreased." The crowds had left him, and he is found continuing his ministry to fewer and fewer, till he is imprisoned by Herod. This event is probably mentioned to show us the truth and humility of John's mind, the last of the Jewish prophets. ¶ *Because there was much water there.* This may be an explanation of the word Ænon, as well as a reason for John's being there. *Much water* in the Greek reads *many waters*, i. e., many springs and rivulets, not any one great body of water. John doubtless immersed his disciples. But this which was done at first in the broad and flowing Jordan, is continued now in little rivulets. At the same time the ministry of Jesus, at first hardly visible, was increasing and swelling in importance and fame. Jesus by His disciples was baptizing, as is supposed, at the same place where John had before been, *Bethabara.* This change struck His disciples with astonishment.

24. *For John was not yet cast into prison.* See Luke iii. 20. The office of St. John being only to prepare the way for Jesus, we can see that it was in a manner necessary for that harmony which is always a part of the Divine plan of working, that he should gradually decrease and disappear. So we here see that his preaching was first removed from the neighborhood of Jerusalem; that it became less attractive than that of his Master, and soon he was imprisoned by Herod. His ministry probably continued about a year. Then, lest it should, in spite of his own efforts, produce a sect in opposition to Jesus, it suddenly ceased. It was a grand lesson of humility which John gave, that he was so willing to be used by God either for honor or dishonor; either as the popular preacher to multitudes, or the faithful prophet in a distant prison. It is the mark of a gracious spirit to be willing to serve God in good or evil report, in joy or in sorrow.

25. *A question.* Rather a discussion or dispute. ¶ *John's disciples.* Those who had followed him. We see the common instinct of men to form sects and find questions of contention, in this act. John was professedly only *the voice*, preceding the Son of God. But it was time that he should be removed, when his friends would make him the patron of a party. ¶ *And the Jews.* The last text of the Greek reads in the singular number, with a Jew. But either way we suppose it a question made with some who had been at the baptism of Jesus, and were inclined to claim more for it, more than John's friends could allow. For the very mode of stating the question, "Rabbi, He that was with thee," &c., shows that Jesus had been the subject of debate. Unlearned Christians are most apt to be heady about "doubtful disputations." It is only experience in spiritual things, which makes the mind truly catholic, truly kind to weakness and ignorance, careful and wise in upholding truth. This man, how little he knew; yet he disputes. Let us receive the principles of religion so deep into the heart that our questions may be to the glory of God, which is not promoted ever by the wrath of man. ¶ *Purifying.* The question was concerning either the manner or degree of purifying. Whether it were better done by St. John or by Jesus; by the baptism of repentance

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

27 John answered and said, [a]A man can [‖]receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

[a] 1 Cor. 4. 7; Heb. 5. 4; Jas. 1. 17. ‖ Or, *take unto himself.*

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to a coming Lord, or into a kingdom of One who seemed to be a Nazarene. Saith St. Augustine: "The Jews then asserted Christ to be the greater person, and His baptism necessary to be received. But John's disciples did not understand so much, and defended John's baptism." As John had not given them the right to baptize, they may have supposed that it was an act of disrespect for any to do it; or that it would bring the rite into discredit. Many remained as disciples of John till after the Church was fully constituted. Acts xviii. 25; and xix. 2–6. In this latter passage of the Acts we see the true relation of the two ordinances, as taught by St. Paul.

26. *Rabbi.* Teacher, our Master, whose duty it is to defend Thy disciples from discredit. ¶ *That was with thee.* Why do they say *with thee*, and no more? Did they know how to mark Jesus thus, and not know that the Holy Ghost fell on Him there, as on no others? Or were they angry and unwilling to name Him? Alas, for the frailty of the best men. How easy to lose religion in contending for it, and under a show of zeal for truth, become uncharitable and unjust. ¶ *Thou barest witness.* To whom thou didst manifest thy humility. Ch. i. 29–35. God did also witness, that He was a greater than John. Would they have a doubt of this? Did they think that John was only speaking figuratively and by an over-great humility? These disciples have not the grace of their Master, who deserved to be called the greatest of the prophets. ¶ *All men come to Him.* And leave John. The place where John then was, was in *Samaria.* We wonder at it, recalling the fact that the Jews had no dealings of friendliness with that people. A similar story to this is related in Numb. xi. 27, 28, 29. And Moses said unto them, "Enviest thou for my sake?—would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that God *would put His Spirit upon them.*" See also Luke ix. 49. May we not find a lesson to make us patient and bide the Lord's time? When we burn against the zeal of others who "follow not with us," may we not pause to weigh these three scenes, and while we avoid the errors of other men, leave their actions and motives to the Father of all? There are sects, but there is still truth and a Church. Let us hold to it; let us be patient with them.

27. *John answered.* Explaining their difficulty and instructing them in his previous preaching. He showed neither presumption nor pride, but took no other notice of their dispute of purification, than to point them to the common principle of all religion, that all that is good in man must come from God. ¶ *A man, &c.* No man can take to himself spiritual power and office, such as Jesus manifested, unless it be given him of God. Now, among the Jews, the prophets belonged to no tribe or order, but God sent them from any quarter, as He had need of them. Their credentials were miracles, or certain prophetic marks, known to the people. John speaks as a Jew: "No man can show himself a prophet by true signs (such as I saw in Jesus), unless God hath given him his power." The case of the Christian ministry is of another kind. It is a perpetual office, into which none may be lawfully admitted, otherwise than as the authorized rulers of the Church do allow. Men out of the ministry may be raised up at times for special purposes, and be useful and honored; but the common discipline of the Church, the preaching and sacraments, can be allowed to none, except those lawfully ordained, unless they

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 [a]He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the [b]earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

a 2 Cor. 11. 2; Eph. 5. 25, 27; Rev. 21. 9.

b 1 Cor. 15. 47; Eph. 1. 21; Phil. 2. 9.

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offer miracles to support their claim of a special call. For no one can testify of himself, as they who claim an inward call must do. Thus under the first covenant, while prophets were sent in no regular order, the common duties of religion were performed by a class of men of the tribe of Levi, whose ranks were never transgressed. Success in preaching is no proof now of a vocation from God; but rather a spirit of zeal for the truth, moderated by a reverent regard for the laws and regulations of the Christian Church.

28. *Bear me witness.* They had erred in this matter, as many do still. They had heard this assertion, but either had disregarded it or explained it away. There is nothing easier to erring man than to treat the inspired words of God's prophets and apostles after this manner. Often the true Christian is startled to find how far his prejudices, or his blind trust in others, have led him astray, while the word of God was plain and precise before him. John from the first, as we can see, had put himself on a lower seat. Matt. iii. The words of Scripture are very plain. Prejudice gives them a thousand shades of meaning.

29. *He that hath the bride.* In a marriage the bridegroom received the bride probably from the hands of his friend. This friend, called the *paranymph*, had many duties to perform during the ceremony. Could such a friend grieve at the joy of the bridegroom, or that for the time he was forgotten by the bride? So the Jewish Church was then the "virgin daughter of Jerusalem." John had ministered to her joy for the time. Now the Bridegroom, the Messiah, had come. He could not grieve at the signs of His power and progress. The prophets had given ground for this illustration. Is. lxii. 4; see Eph. v. 27; Rev. xxii. 17.

30. *He must increase.* Must grow in power and in the number of His followers. It is difficult without care and study to feel now all that moved the noble heart of this prophet, especially as we are so apt to explain these expressions of his feelings only by the Christian doctrines known only after the full illumination of the Spirit of God. There is a melancholy grandeur in them, if we reflect on the *decrease*, which actually happened to John, till his death. He saw his work done, the Messiah present, and probably supposed that the visions of the ancient prophets were about to come to pass. Afterwards he felt a doubt at their delay, but was faithful to the truth as far as he knew it, to the end. It was, beyond doubt, a sad heart, perplexed with many questions, that ceased to beat in the lonely dungeon of Herod's castle.

31. *From above.* From heaven. The Messiah, whom John knew to be the Son of God. 1. By the Old Testament. 2. By the character of His birth of a virgin. 3. By the voice which he heard at His baptism. By these proofs among others, Christ is shown to be from heaven, and of a nature above all other prophets. ¶ *Is above all.* Above all prophets, for the contrast is with John and others like him. This language is, however, part of that golden chain of argument and witness to the Divinity of Christ, and His superiority

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony, hath [a]set to his seal that God is true.

34 For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.*

35 The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hand

[a] Rom. 3. 4; 1 John 5. 10.

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to all created beings, which runs through this whole Gospel. Break this chain, and the pearls which compose the story of it fall into hopeless confusion. ¶ *Of the earth.* A mere man. John claimed only this, that he was a man sent to testify of Christ. Now he draws the contrast as wide as earth and heaven between himself and Christ. One is of earth, a man only, the other from heaven—Christ the Son of God. ¶ *Is earthly.* Is merely man, by natural birth. ¶ *Speaketh of the earth.* Teaches in a limited measure as he has received, and not as one who, being in heaven, has perfect knowledge of the will of God, and the glories of his abode. See v. 11. The teaching of John was earthly also, as it could not raise one above the carnal system of the Jews—"righteousness by the law."

32. *What He hath seen and heard.* The best possible testimony is of one who has seen and heard what he tells. This Evangelist is earnest to impress this principle upon the reader. Others have declared certain truths of God by inspiration, but Jesus, as One who has seen and heard all the Divine will and wisdom. Chs. i. 18; viii. 26; xv. 15. His words therefore are truth, beyond all cavil. ¶ *No man receiveth His testimony.* Very few do it. So few receive it with joy, and honor the Messiah openly, that he says by a common figure of speech, no man. The testimony which Jesus gave was His declarations of the will of God, as we now have it in the doctrines of His Gospel.

33. *Set to his seal.* Set to, is here for simply set. He has sealed. As one who puts his seal to a document of testimony, gives his most solemn pledge of conviction that it is genuine and true, so those who received the testimony which Christ gave, which was then that He was the Messiah sent from God, all such had expressed their conviction to this effect, that God was true in His ancient promises, which were to be fulfilled in Christ. ¶ *God is true.* Or faithful; as we say, true to His word. They were acting wisely, were receiving the words of their Scriptures and trusting in the Lord God, that all things which were written in them were to be fulfilled. So that John's disciples were assured in these words that it was their true wisdom to believe in Jesus, and to be ready to obey His call whenever He should need them. And if we now do not receive this concurring testimony that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, our folly will be surpassed only by our punishment. For the testimony has been sealed by a myriad seals, no one of which can be broken, that God was true, that Christ was sent from Him.

34. *Speaketh the words of God.* Reveals His very voice and will, not imperfectly, but fully and finally. Heb. i. 1. ¶ *The Spirit by measure unto Him.* Not partially, and with special objects, as He did to the prophets. They had special commissions, were inspired at times, had no power to speak beyond their orders, often manifested that they were only weak men; very often knew not the full depth of the words which God spake by them. But not so our Lord. He had not the Spirit by measure. He was perfect in wisdom at all times, for all duties and commissions, and knew all that was in heaven and earth, all that man needed, and all that God intended, for his salvation. This is a plain proof of the Divinity of Christ. Such knowledge is above a creature to

36 He [a]that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

a Hab. 2. 4; Rom. 1. 17; 1 John 5. 10.

have. As Christ had all the Spirit given to Him as Mediator, so He is able to impart its gifts by measure to the wants of His people.

35. *Loveth the Son.* By reason of this character God is united to the Son in bonds of perfect union. ¶ *Hath given all things into His hand.* Has submitted all creation and the whole kingdom of grace to His will. See Matt. xxviii. 18; Dan. vii. 14.

36. *Hath everlasting life.* Hath a right to it by the covenant of faith in Him. This was a solemn warning to the disciples of John, that they must seek eternal life in Christ. This sublime epitome of the Gospel covenant from the lips of the last of the Jewish prophets, is to be regarded by us as the voice of the wisdom which the Mosaic system understood in its spirit, and the preceding prophets had taught him. It is in a sense the last voice of inspiration from that prophetic line; and it declares the two terms, faith and eternal life, unbelief and abiding wrath, with the greatest clearness and force. The Epistles and the sermons of all divines since, are living comments on this text. It stands now before all as the dividing of two roads. In Christ salvation and eternal life: out of Him, God a consuming fire whose wrath burns to the lowest hell. ¶ *Abideth on him.* He does not say, *The wrath of God* cometh to him, but *abideth on him.* For all who are born are under the wrath of God, which the first Adam incurred. The Son of God came without sin, and was clothed with mortality. He died that thou mightest live. Whosoever then will not believe on the Son, on him abideth the wrath of God, of which the Apostle speaks: "We were by nature the children of wrath."—*St. Augustine.*

"Rock of Ages! cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood
From Thy side, a healing flood,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath, and make me pure."
Toplady---Hymn 139.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *When therefore the Lord knew.* This was probably late in the year. This seems to have been known by Divine knowledge. ¶ *The Pharisees had heard.* Probably the Sanhedrim were considering the matter with the design of arresting His progress. This powerful sect composed a majority of the great council. Their special care was to regulate the custom of religion: as they had before this examined John the Baptist, now they begin to show an organized hostility to the Saviour. Under a covenant made up so largely of ordinances and ceremonies as the Mosaic system, it was a question of great importance—this introduction of new rites, or giving a new meaning to old ones. It was so intended from the first by God Himself, that the change of the covenant should be made very marked and established by evident signs from heaven. Only the Pharisees were perverse, and blinded their eyes to those signs, and would not believe in Christ. This was their sin, not that they proposed to inquire by what right or power these changes were made. The latter was their duty. The Sadducees, though a part of the Sanhedrim, took no interest in matters of ceremony. ¶ *More disciples than John.* It was probably about this time that St. John was imprisoned, and his mission and public life brought to a close.

2. *Though Jesus Himself baptized not.*

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that [a]Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

a Gen. 33. 19; & 48. 22; Josh. 24. 32.

The reason for this was, beyond doubt, to make more marked the distinction between all former washings and baptism in the Church. The former were only "signs and seals," the latter was "a certain sure witness and effectual sign of grace, and God's good will towards us, by which He doth work invisibly in us."—*Article XXV.* Christ's baptism began in an outward and visible sign of fire from heaven, after He had purchased redemption for man. Acts ii. and i. 5. *Christian baptism* could not begin before the Christian redemption was completed and the Church ready to appear. Lightfoot reasons thus: "Why did not Christ baptize? 1. Because He was occupied in weightier matters, teaching, &c. 1 Cor. i. 17. 2. He could hardly have properly baptized in His own name. 3. Because He was to baptize by the Spirit. Acts i. 5. 4. To prevent the heats which would arise, if some of the disciples had been baptized by Christ, and others by the Apostles."

3. *He left Judea.* For personal safety and an example to us. In persecutions Christians may avoid by proper cautions the rage of men. Jesus was to work for a certain time among men, which He calls "mine hour." Till then He adopted the usual means of seeking His safety, when His life was in danger. ¶ *Departed again.* The first departure is mentioned ch. i. 43. The imprisonment of John caused Him to pass through Samaria, the most direct road to Galilee. See Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14.

4. *He must needs go through Samaria.* Not through the city so called, but the country, which lay between Judea and Galilee. He might have taken a circuitous route by crossing the Jordan, as He did in His last journey to the city.

5. *Sychar.* Sichar, Sichem, or Shechem; afterwards named by the Romans *Flavia Neapolis*, and thence corrupted into its present name *Naplous*. It is about forty miles from Jerusalem and fifteen miles south of Samaria, in the tribe of Ephraim, and one of the oldest cities in Palestine. Gen. xii. 6; xxxiii. 18. It lies between the famous mountains Ebal and Gerizim, and was anciently a city of refuge. Josh. xxi. 21. Joseph was buried there with the other patriarchs. Acts vii. 16. It became the capital city of the region after the ruin of Samaria by Shalmanezer. It is now the largest town on the road from Acre to Jerusalem. "There is nothing in the Holy Land finer than a view of Napolose from the height around it, luxuriantly embosomed in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half concealed by rich gardens, and by stately trees collected into groves, all around the bold and beautiful valley in which it stands."—*Dr. Clarke.* While Jerusalem has become the city of the Gentiles and without a Jewish sacrifice, the Samaritans still dwell in Naplous, and sacrifice as of old on Mount Gerizim. ¶ *That Jacob gave.* See Gen. xlviii. 22.

6. *Jacob's well.* A spring deep in the earth, so as not to be reached by the hand, is a well. A church was afterwards erected over this spot, but has fallen to ruin. "This is situated at a small distance from the town, in the road to Jerusalem, and has been visited by pilgrims of all ages. It is so distinctly marked by the Evangelist, and so little liable to uncertainty, from the circumstance of the well itself, and the features of the country, that if no tradition existed for its identity, the site of it could hardly be mistaken." The well is still seen, the witness of the doctrine of the *living water*, which was there taught.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? [a]for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living [b]water.

a 2 Kings 17. 24; Lu. 9. 52; Acts 10. 28.

b Jer. 2. 13; Zech. 13. 1; & 14. 8.

¶ *Sat thus on the well.* Sat thus, i. e., as a person very tired would do. ¶ *On the well.* On the stones by its margin. It was a hole in the earth dug out among rocks, by the patriarch. ¶ *Sixth hour.* Or noon. The sun therefore hot, and the traveller tired and thirsty with His rapid walk from Judea. It was the usual meal time, so that the disciples had passed on to the city to obtain food.

7. *Of Samaria.* A Samaritan. The traveller at this day sees the women of Naplous, going alone or in parties to the same well, to obtain water for their families, which they bear gracefully in earthen jars upon the head. ¶ *Give Me to drink.* Jesus was weary and thirsty and could not reach the water. He asked that which humanity every where directs men to give freely. This scene is a comment on the promise to him who gives "a cup of cold water only." Matt. x. 42. It is the privilege of every Christian to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and doing so by faith, to look for spiritual blessing from Jesus.

8. *Disciples.* Not the twelve, for they were not yet chosen. Matt. x. It would not have required twelve men to buy food. They were some few of the individuals afterwards selected. See Acts i. 43. These first chapters of this Gospel relate the events which happened in the first year of our Lord's ministry. The choice of the twelve was made in the second year.

9. *No dealings.* Of an amicable sort. A Jew would have been ashamed to ask; would either have come provided to draw water, or passed on his way till he could find a supply. See note, Matt. x. 5.

10. *The gift of God.* That gift which is *the living water.* The great opportunity which is now offered to you, a Samaritan, of conversing with the Messiah sent by God, and hearing from Him the words of life. For He explains His words afterwards, showing His meaning. Christ was the One given by God. John iii. 16. His Gospel the gift of God. Eph. ii. 8. This is soon after called "living water," and largely illustrated. ¶ *Who it is.* The Messiah spoken of by the Jacob who gave this well. Gen. xlix. 10, 24. The Samaritans received the books of Moses as divine. ¶ *Living water.* Living or running water is that which issues from a spring, in contrast to that which is still, in ponds or tanks. It is a favorite word with the inspired writers, who lived in that dry and hot climate, to express the grace of God, given in the Gospel. Jer. ii. 13; Is. xli. 19; Zech. xiii. 1. Our Lord gives it this general sense, and also, as St. John notes (vii. 39), at times a more particular meaning, of the Holy Spirit, which acts upon the human soul to make it live and flourish, even as the springs of water upon the arid soil. "The metaphor of fire conveys the lively and sin-consuming property of grace; that of water the cleansing of the Spirit and the refreshing of the souls who receive Him."—*St. Chrysostom.*

11. *Nothing to draw with.* No bucket or vessel of His own. The woman spoke honestly, but unthinkingly. It was not unusual for the ancient teachers to make use of simple words drawn from common life, to convey their instructions. It was probably the strangeness of a Jewish teacher offering a gift either of living water or spiritual instruction,

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

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and speaking kindly to one of her hated people, that surprised her.

12. *Art Thou greater.* Wiser in supernatural knowledge, able to find other water than this, around here. Water was of that value in the East, that springs of it have been matters of contest, and become famous in history both sacred and profane. She was not perhaps otherwise minded than Nicodemus, when he seemed to stumble at another sublime assertion (ch. iii. 4), not for the purpose of denying, but of drawing out a further explanation. ¶ *Our father Jacob.* Josephus informs us that the Samaritans were fond of boasting their lineage from the patriarch, in the times of Jewish prosperity; because there were a few remnants of the Ten Tribes mixed in the Cuthean multitude. ¶ *Which gave us the well.* Pointed it out, perhaps uncovered it. We read of Isaac digging wells. Gen. xxvi. 15, 18, &c. This fact of Jacob, was matter of tradition, which in the chief features of a landscape or country, is not an unsafe witness. ¶ *And drank thereof, &c.* This proves it a *perpetual* spring, and so far a living water. Antiquity and ancestral rights are among the things, concerning which men reason fondly and loosely. It was a harmless boasting of the woman, that she should offer this fact to a Jew, who used to her this strange salutation. She would meet Him, with a claim of her ancient dignity; an implied appeal against the haughtiness of His nation towards hers; a claim for the honor of this her oft-visited spring. But how does all this sink below comparison with the source, the purity, the eternity of the living fountain opened in Judah for sin and uncleanness! How trifling, compared with it, are questions of party!

13. *Shall thirst again.* This is the defect which natural water has. It cannot satisfy once and for all; and so, though Jacob and myriads since had used it, it was but in a poor sense *living*, compared with the real sense of the word as He had used it. Spiritual truth is alone eternal.

14. *The water that I shall give him.* The phrase is *future.* It refers to that gift of God, which was fully given, and that too, to these very people, only after the Saviour's work of redemption was accomplished. This gift was, 1. Christ Himself. "God gave His only begotten Son," &c. John iii. 16. 2. The Holy Ghost, given by God, *in its fulness*, after Jesus was glorified. John vii. 39. 3. The Gospel covenant and the records of it in Scripture and the Church, which were the gifts of Divine mercy. Eph. ii. 7, 8. 4. The individual graces wrought in each soul, which are the effects of the other gifts, and wrought by them. James i. 17, 18. To the sin-fevered and weary sinner, the Gospel is like water to a thirsty and fainting soul, longed for by the saint, says David, "as the hart panteth after the water brooks." Ps. xlii. 1, 2. ¶ *Shall never thirst.* Temporal, bodily pleasure is contrasted with eternal and spiritual satisfaction. The one is brief, passing, perishing in the using, needing repetition—the other is enduring and unchangeable. He who receives the good seed into a soul prepared for it by convictions of sin and ruin, and watered by tears of penitence and dew from heaven, can never seek again for the broken cisterns of

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I [a]thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.[b]

[a] Ch. 4. 34; & 17. 2, 3. [b] Lu. 7. 16.

human devices. He has the fountain always opened, always free, the river that makes glad the city of God; that joy and peace in believing, which springs up within him unto everlasting life. Thus Jesus unfolds to the woman by degrees, and to us also for whom it was written, the doctrine of spiritual comfort and grace.

15. *Sir, give me, &c.* She understands only in part, that He is speaking of some wonderful gift, some supernatural blessing, whose effect was to relieve her of one of the natural wants of humanity. She probably felt more than her words imply to us, that the possessor of this miraculous water would be eminently favored of Heaven. All men are as apt as she was, to imagine their true happiness to consist in things without, rather than within them.

16. *Go call thy husband.* This seems an abrupt change. But think upon it. She asked for the living water, yes or no. Jesus must first enlighten her eyes to His meaning and her true wants, by teaching her two truths. 1. His own character. 2. Her sinfulness, or her character. Thus she might learn wherein she was "weary and heavy laden," and how He would give her rest. For till she felt her *sin*, rather than the poverty which caused her to labor and come thither to draw, she could not value the spiritual gift. How delicately is the lesson given—drawn rather—from her own confession. And in that humiliation behold the light flashes from the promise. She sees her sinfulness, but sees with it the knowledge and power of a prophet of God, to point the way of pardon.

17. *I have no husband.* None. She blushes to confess to a Jewish teacher that she was living in sin. Thus is the fountain of living waters shut up and sealed by sins. Only after every known sin has been confessed and rejected, does it begin to spring up in the soul.

18. *Thou hast had five husbands.* Perhaps sins and crimes were recalled by these words, which her conscience trembled at; scenes and trials, which she supposed that no mortal knew. The woman, in repeating this conversation, said that Jesus had "told her *all things* she had ever done." v. 29. This may have referred to this single item of knowledge; but probably the conversation was continued. The continuation being personal and delicate, was properly omitted. She was instantly convinced that she was speaking with a person of no ordinary claim to reverence. Her manner changes at once.

19. *A prophet.* For the prophets were often enlightened in a supernatural manner, and knew the secrets of those around them. To know that which can be known only by supernatural means, is proof of a power above man; to use it only for good, marks the power to come from God. She does not yet openly speak of Him as the Christ (v. 25), for that was afterwards revealed to her, and on her return to the city she asks it of her townsmen as a question. But she now recognizes His power, as One favored by God, and acts upon it. Now it may be urged against her by some, that she seems to ask a question of inferior importance, but it is unwisely urged, for, 1. She believes Jesus a prophet, and

20 [a]Our fathers worshipped in [b]this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem[b] is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, [c]when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship [d]ye know not what: we know what we worship, for [e] salvation is of the Jews.

a Jas. 19. 7. *b* Deut. 12. 5, 11; 1 Kings 9. 3; 2 Chron. 7. 12.

c Mal. 1. 11; 1 Tim. 2. 8. *d* 2 Kings 17. 29. *e* Is. 2. 3; Lu. 4. 47.

instantly asks a question, which involved their whole relation to each other, and more; involved the true worship of the God whom both worshipped. There was doubtless a just and exact connection in her mind, as in that of the writer, between her confession of faith and her inquiry. Saith St. Chrysostom: "She is not troubled about thirst, she is eager for doctrine." 2. She manifests the stirrings of the *true thirst*, a thirst to know truth. This she does not show as we should, but as her people would have done, by seeking to know how God would be worshipped. It was not a question of externals, but of vital importance.

20. *Our fathers.* The Samaritans worship still (though secretly, from fear of the Turks) on Mount Gerizim. Deut. xi. 29. Jacob built an altar near Sichem. Gen. xxxiii. 20. See Gen. xii. 6, 7. ¶ *In this mountain.* It lay in sight near the city, crowned by a temple built more than three centuries before this, then destroyed and rebuilt by Gabinius. It was the subject of bitter controversy between the Samaritans and Jews. The former claimed that Abraham and Jacob erected altars on it, that Abraham offered Isaac here, and that certain passages of Deuteronomy pointed it out as peculiarly sacred. As they denied all the other books of the Old Testament, their dispute with the Jews was of course endless. ¶ *In Jerusalem.* To one denying the acts of David and Solomon as directed by Jehovah, it was difficult to show reasons for choosing this city. There is a reverence for the law, and the law only, which is as obstinate as it is arbitrary. One may believe too much, and be superstitious; and also too little, and become sectarian and defective Christians. ¶ *To worship.* Worship, in her mind, signified *sacrifice.* It was by sacrifices of animals that Jehovah was then approached. And it is the end of all animal and local sacrifices which is here announced by the Saviour.

21. *Believe Me.* Trust Me if I tell you that your difficulty is to be ended in a manner you little think of, by rending the vail of the temple and abolishing the system of Moses. ¶ *Worship the Father.* That is, by sacrifices and the types and shadows of the law. For in the sense of spiritual worship by prayer, praise, and the like, God had always been a Spirit, answering prayer to all true hearts—to Hagar in the wilderness, and to Ezekiel and Daniel in pagan lands. But that worship which the world then recognised as the only kind of public worship, which was confined to certain places, was to be abolished. God had been a peculiar protector of the land of Israel. This would cease. Again He would be sought by all men everywhere, who sought Him with the sacrifices of the soul. It was not a matter for her to dwell on, whether God had been worshipped rightly on Gerizim or on Moriah. She must seek Him with her heart, confessing her sins, and desiring the living water which would wash them away. Heb. x. 17, 18, 22.

22. *Ye worship ye know not what.* They had corrupted the true religion of Moses, and mingled it with their idolatries, and were, indeed, living in great ignorance of the true nature of God. The Cuthites whom the king of Babylon placed in the cities vacated by the Ten tribes, were originally idolaters and not of the seed of Abraham. They were at first plagued by lions, and then sought to make peace with Jehovah by joining His worship to that of idols, which was

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh,

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before practised among them. They were then ignorant worshippers. This is the inspired record: "Unto this day they do after their former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and the commandments which the law commanded the children of Jacob whom He named Israel, with whom the Lord had made a covenant and charged them saying, *Ye shall not fear other gods*, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them." 2 Kings xvii. 34, 35, &c. 1. The Samaritans were not in the covenant, which was made with Israel only. 2. They obeyed not the whole law of Moses. 3. They had confused and wrong notions of Jehovah. ¶ *Salvation is of the Jews.* 1. Salvation was to be obtained in obeying the law, in its spirit, which looked to Christ. Ps. xix. 7–11. 2. The Saviour of sinners then sprung from the Jewish race and fulfilled all its types and prophecies, which had shadowed out the common salvation.

23. *And now is.* It had begun to be, since those who then listened to and believed in Christ would go on to perfection and become members of the Church about to be established. Or the Jewish Priesthood was no longer exclusively favored, when the true High Priest appeared. ¶ *True worshippers.* Those worthy of the name; such as were instructed and offered the service of the whole heart in all godly sincerity. ¶ *In spirit.* Not as is sometimes perversely said, in spirit as opposed to all outward worship, for both are necessary to men; but as opposed to an exclusive ritual and animal sacrifices. For this is the subject of the conversation. Spiritual worship is, 1. The worship of the soul in any and all circumstances, alone or in public, uttered or unexpressed." 2. The performing the liturgic public services of religion in all godly honesty, offering not the service of the body only, but the whole man; "the soul and body to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice." 3. The service of the true Christian, which crowns a life of pure obedience by acts of conscious devotion. These are each and all wrought by the Holy Spirit in our hearts. ¶ *In truth.* Opposed, 1. To corrupted forms of worship, such as the Samaritan. 2. To insincere and hypocritical worship—which may be the sin of any man, under all dispensations and covenants. 3. To types and shadows, such as the former covenant offered. This the Gospel abolished, and opened the way for all men to come boldly to the throne of grace, without doubt of the will and mercy of God.

24. *God is a Spirit.* This is a clear enunciation of what was said by pious persons and prophets in terms suited to their ages: by Hagar (Gen. xvi. 13), by David (Ps. cxxxix. 7), by Solomon (1 Kings viii. 27. See Acts xvii. 24), by Micah, vi. 6, 7. But as God had appeared at times under visible forms, and had hitherto confined His revelation to one land, it was a truth to be much insisted upon in that change of dispensation, that God was no longer to be worshipped by the sacrifices of the law. A Spirit sees our spirits and must be worshipped by them. A spirit is everywhere present to hear prayer and to punish hypocrisy.

25. *Messias cometh.* This the Samaritans hoped for on the authority of Moses, whose five books they received as their Scripture. Deut. xviii. 15; Acts iii. 22; vii. 37. ¶ *Will tell us all things.* Will teach us the true religion perfectly, and settle all disputes between us and the Jews. It thus appears that the despised Samaritans had better notions of the office of the Messiah than the more favored Jews. The latter proudly claimed perfection for their law,

which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

27 ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

28 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

31 ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples

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and refused a Saviour who offered to complete it as the great end and fulfilment of its shadows. The former, seeing their system to be defective, admitted the claim of One who came to perfect religion and show the true way of salvation. Before men can believe in a Saviour, they must clearly see that they stand in need of salvation by Him.

26. *I that speak unto thee am He.* She hears the great truth, which few others heard in such plain words, until later—for she was then manifesting docility and faith. And though we now imagine the assertion so self-evident as to have needed no explanation, yet we see that Jesus thought fit to prepare the mind of the woman gradually to receive it. When pride is absent and confession present, we may hope to reach to the saving truths of religion. 1. The woman in return for a cup of cold water hears of the living water. 2. She discovers a prophet, and listens with faith. 3. She is led on to behold the Messias, whom she looked for. When charity softens a sinner's heart, it is often in the right state to entertain salutary truths.

27. *Upon this.* Just then, as her looks betrayed her interest and wonder. ¶ *Marvelled.* Were surprised; probably their pride was a little shocked. It was contrary to the customs of their people to converse with Samaritans. Nor could they imagine why He should converse with her, for they had as yet no idea that He had come to save any out of the pale of Judaism. Alas, that Christians still marvel after this evil sort, and do not recognize the necessity of the spiritual work of grace, breaking the bounds set for it by prejudice, indolence, and lukewarm formalism. If man could make the borders of the Church, how fatal for the mass of those who live under the sun and rain of the omnipresent Father.

28. *Left her water-pot.* In her haste she forgets it. She will have her neighbors come and hear Christ. She runs back to the city to call them. She becomes an apostle for the time being. Thus does the love of God and truth ever set men on desiring to communicate it. And a good sign of that love is, when it makes us forget the worldly objects of former desire. She had obtained a draught of the living stream, and forgets her former thirst.

29. *Is not this the Christ?* It was not wrong nor a sign of unbelief that she asked this question. For it is a mark of commendable prudence, not to be hurried away with even the truth, but to consider carefully, and consult the wise for farther light. Fanatics leap to a conclusion, and are thenceforth infallible and irrational; the wise Christian should gladly follow the light, but beware always of a mistake in what he takes for light. It is the want of this caution that has caused so many sects in the Church. 1 Thess. v. 21.

30. *Came unto Him.* Jesus chooses to be sought by them, that He may teach His disciples a lesson of mercy for these half-heathen Samaritans, for

one to another, Hath any man brought him *aught* to eat?

24 Jesus saith unto them, [a]My meat is to do the will of him that

a Job 23. 12; Ch. 6. 38; & 17. 4; & 19. 30.

sent me, and to finish his work.

25 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you,

their future guidance. Acts viii. 5–8.

31. *Master, eat.* They begged Him to eat, supposing Him as intent on satisfying His hunger as they were.

33. *Hath any, &c.* They, like the woman, could not understand spiritual things without many instructions. She had mistaken the living water; they now err in the Saviour's meaning concerning the true food, the love of God and His works. Matt. iv. 4; Deut. viii. 3.

34. *My meat.* My food. Food sustains the body; so the words which proceed out of the mouth of God are the true life and delight of the soul. It was the great design of the Saviour for which He came into the world, to fulfil the commands of the Father. John vi. 38. He may well neglect and forget the care of one meal in doing this work, and offering life to a human soul living in darkness. This portion of our Lord's life, His example in subjecting the lower nature to the higher, the body to the soul, deserves the most careful study. 1. That we may avoid luxury and carnal ease, which are opposed to the spirit of the Christian. Ro. viii. 5. 2. That we avoid asceticism, which is destructive to the tender affections of social life. Jesus was pure and spiritual, but He was neither lax nor fanatical in His teachings. ¶ *To finish His work.* The work of redemption for the saving of souls, both providing the means in His own sufferings, and calling men off from worldly things to receive its blessings. John xvii. 4. The contemplation of divine things calls off the mind from the care of earthly food, and satisfies the desires of the soul to that degree that it forgets them. Hunger, weariness and all were at the time lost in the glorious subjects which had been spoken of to this Samaritan, and the benign joy of seeing her profit by them.

35. *Say not ye.* Would you not say that it is four months from the harvest, and by the signs now visible conclude that there is one coming? So I see the spiritual harvest which ye are to reap, and am now casting the seed. He thus interprets the words concerning the will of His Father. ¶ *Four months, &c.* The beginning of the first harvest was in the Jewish month Nisan, or from the Passover. Lev. xxiii. 10; Deut. xvi. 9. Reckoning backward, it was about the beginning of December when this conversation occurred. It required in that climate about four months between sowing and reaping. Hence it was the time of sowing seed. Now by the circumstance of likeness and difference between the natural and moral field, Jesus impresses His meaning. 1. Likeness. The sower sows seed and it dies in the earth. No fruit follows at once. He waits long for it, and expects the early and latter rains. So I now sow and cast the seed here and there as occasion presents. This is My work and the will of God. This is the time of preparation for your future harvesting. 2. By the difference. The natural fields are now broken up, and without a spear of the seed planted being visible, but the mind's eye may see them yet full of grain. So the field of the spiritual sower is to faith even now "white already to the harvest." ¶ *Lift up your eyes.* And when you see the fields naked, receive my meaning as referring to spiritual things. ¶ *White already.* Grain when ripe appears of a grayish yellow, and in some lights white. The moral signs were as plain. For the city before them was already coming to receive the seed. The world was divinely prepared at that time for the Gospel. Judaism had waxed old; the idolatries of the earth had grown burdensome and disgusting to the wisest pagans, and as in this city many were looking for the Messi-

Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that [a]reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.

a Dan. 12. 3.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 ¶ And many of the Samar-

as, who should show them all things. But with us Christians the field is always ready. How great the harvest of the heathen world, how few the laborers in the work of missions. Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest.

36. *He that reapeth.* St. Philip, the deacon, was the future reaper of this harvest. Acts viii. Our Lord was the sower. If then Jesus was content to labor unnoticed, that others should gather in the fruits, should we ever be weary in well-doing? Should we measure the duty to work only by the success of it? ¶ *Gathereth fruit unto life eternal.* Lays up a reward for his future spiritual life, as surely as the reaper lays up the sheaves of his field, for his natural food. The spiritual labor is seen in increase in grace, holiness and benevolence; in doing good to others, and loving God more heartily; in preaching the Gospel, and converting sinners from the error of their ways. The reward is as a harvest, where that which was sown in tears and rain, often is gathered in with joy. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. ¶ *That both he, &c.* The Christian work is one of common good, and he that now labors in the ways of religion to do good to others, both sows for others to reap, and himself finds his reward. We live not to ourselves alone, but always for the weal or woe of others. One generation sends out missions and another sees the nations bowing to the cross. One pastor dies after a fruitful work in a parish, another enters into his labors. Both and all rejoice together; the one in belief of a future harvest, the other in memory of past toils and prayers. Blessed is that spring sowing of the Sunday school teacher, before the enemy has time to cherish noxious tares into vigorous growth.

37. *That saying.* That proverb which is gathered from the natural law of seed, and used by the idle and luxurious as a satire to deter all earnest effort. It is still found in the writings of the subtle and luxurious Greeks. In this respect only, says Jesus, it has a true meaning, or one that is useful. For, while, in the case of the ground, one sows and is disappointed, and another reaps or steals and destroys the harvest; and in the world a man often labors in vain and loses his ends, yet in the Church it is not so. For there, all who labor faithfully, gain the great ends, the glory of God and their salvation, though many see it only by a patient faith.

38. *Other men labored.* Patriarchs; Moses, Prophets, and John the Baptist, all labored to carry on the work of God to the point of its perfection. You Apostles have, by the will of God, not by your own merits, come at a time to gather the new Church, and to see the glories which they long waited for in vain. In the the mind of Christ, as in that of God, the whole work of revelation lay in view at once; stretching through centuries and dispensations, from the Lamb slain from the fonndation of the world, to Isaac stretched on the altar; to Moses on Sinai; to Calvary, andthe new Jerusalem. Each faithful soul bears its part; some have laid the foundation stones upon the Rock of ages, others the coping, with the lofty and exulting faith and joy of fully instructed Christians. How weak then is the

itans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

41 And many more believed, because of his own word;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for [a]we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

43 ¶ Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

a Ch. 17. 8; 1 John 4. 14. *b* Matt. 13. 57; Mark 6. 4.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet [b]hath no honour in his own country.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: [c]for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came again into [d]Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain [‖]nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal, his son: for he was at the point of death.

c Deut. 16. 16. *d* Ch. 2. 1, 11. ‖ Or *courtier*, or *ruler*.

faith of the believer who does not yield himself wholly to the Maker of all, and ask only to be used by Him for His own glory!

39–42. *Indeed the Christ.* It is remarkable that Jesus should have been first confessed as Christ in a Samaritan city. But two reasons helped to this: 1. He declared Himself openly to them, because there was no danger in so doing, of exciting sedition and so hindering the work of grace in the souls of men. They could not easily make war for one who was King of the Jews. They could, therefore, be plainly taught to believe in Him as the Christ. 2. This circumstance seems to have had a powerful effect in their own moral nature. They, like the poor, listened to Christ more readily, because like them they were measurably free from pride, and *pride* was the stumbling block of the Jews, as it is of unbelievers now.

43. *Into Galilee.* Galilee lay to the north of Samaria. Jesus entered it, making His way to Cana.

44. *For Jesus Himself testified, &c.* See note, Matt. xiii. 57. The connection of this verse has puzzled the learned. Perhaps, the unlearned, who use language somewhat more freely, may more easily unravel the knot. It seems that St. John had something in mind which was too evident to set down, which is, however, logically necessary. Is it not this? Jesus remained two days in Samaria and many believed on Him. He went into Galilee, His native land, and *few believed on Him;* and this was not surprising to Him, for He had testified to this effect of His teaching of His own accord. "He stayed two days in Samaria and the Samaritans believed on Him. He stayed the same time in Galilee and the Galileans did not believe on Him, and therefore He said, a Prophet," &c.—*St. Augustine.*

45. *Received Him.* Entertained Him kindly, because they had seen Him honored abroad in Jerusalem; not because they could testify to His holy life, a fact which was far more important to Him and them. Men will always wonder at miracles and neglect the sublimest vision of earth, *a holy life*.

46. *A certain nobleman.* Some com-

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see [a]signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to

[a] 1 Cor. 1. 22.

mentators think him an officer of King Herod's, others one of Cæsar's household, then employed for the time in Judea. For he was called "a *nobleman*, literally a royalist or royal person, either from his being of the royal family or holding an office at court" St. Luke mentions a "*Chuza*, Herod's steward" (St. Luke viii. 3) and Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod. Acts xiii. 1. This is not the Centurion, whom St. Matthew speaks of. Ch. viii. 5.

47. *Would come down.* The ancients used the words *ascend* and *descend* in regard to places inland or on the seaboard. Cana was in a mountainous region. The nobleman's house was at Capernaum, on the sea of Tiberias, which was of course lower ground.

48. *Except ye see, &c.* This was said to the multitude, as well as to the nobleman. And it conveys a lesson to every reader, which all men more or less need. It is necessary to look beyond the miracles of Christ and the signs of mere transient character to the spiritual and moral lessons of Scripture. We wonder, childlike, at the strange deeds of miraculous power. It is well, they were of worthy kind. But let us not put the *signs* above the thing *signified*, and value them as superior to that holiness and moral beauty, which Jesus showed forth and taught us. "Our Lord would have the mind of the believer so raised above all mutable things as not to seek even for miracles. For miracles, though sent from heaven, are in their subject-matter, mutable."—*St. Augustine.*

49. *Come down.* Earnest prayer overleaps little obstructions. The man's heart was right. He wanted a blessing. He had not come to test the Saviour, nor from a vain wish to look on a wonder, but to see his son cured. He is filled with grief, and his mind has no place now to reason on other things. So the sinner, who loves to cavil and speculate on minor matters in religion, is amazed to find that when real penitence comes upon him, his mental difficulties all evaporate into air.

50. *Go thy way.* Return in peace; there is no need that I should go with thee. Jesus will not go with him, 1. To manifest to all present, that he could work a miracle, though not present in person. 2. To prevent any afterthoughts of pride in the nobleman's heart. See 2 Kings v. 11. 3. To prevent injurious impressions among His friends in Galilee, who, already valuing the esteem of others too highly, would easily think evil of Him, if they saw Him entertained by the wealthy. ¶ *Thy son liveth.* This was, of course, equivalent to *is well* of his complaint, and it was so understood by the hearer. Verse 53. ¶ *The man believed.* Believed that Jesus spoke the truth, though his heart is troubled still after its previous anxieties. He therefore questions his servants as to the hour, in order to remove all doubts. Belief is not always instantaneous, nor should it be; for the faith of the highest kind deserves the full assent of the whole mind, and though there are seasons when the mind can act with singular rapidity, yet the usual laws of its action demand time and admit of degrees.

52. *Seventh hour.* About one o'clock in the afternoon.

53. *Knew.* Recognised the fact of

amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER this there was a [a]feast of the Jews: and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem, [b]by the sheep [‖]*market*, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, having five porches.

a Lev. 23. 2; Deut. 16. 1. & 12. 39. *b* Neh. 3. 1; ‖ Or, *gate*.

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the time being the same, and that Jesus had informed him of it. Thus there was a miracle of power and one of knowledge. He cured the child, and informed the father of it, though the son was many miles distant. Now the words used by our Lord make more prominent the latter fact—for He uses no words of power to effect the cure, but simply informs the nobleman of it as done. True, the one power inferred the other; but the one was beyond cavil, the other was not. And doubtless there were circumstances in the case unknown to us, which caused this manner of proceeding. ¶ *The fever left him.* Suddenly, with a marked change, such as surprised all the household, and caused them to send the messengers to inform the father of it. ¶ *Believed.* Believed fully. "The third grade of faith," says Grotius. 1. He believed Jesus to be a worker of wonders and goes to Him. 2. He believes His word and obeys His command to return. 3. He seems to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, and to profess himself a disciple. "So we see faith, like the other virtues, is formed gradually and has its beginning, growth, and maturity. His faith had its beginning when he asked for his son's recovery; its growth, when he believed our Lord's words, *Thy son liveth;* its maturity after the announcement of the fact by his servants."—*Bede.*

54. *When He was come out.* The other miracle is related ch. ii. 1, &c. That was done on His coming out of Judea into Galilee. The conversion of this nobleman is the more remarkable, as he was the first person of importance and power, who became a believer. The first was wrought on inert matter—water; this, on the living body of a child. The greatest works of grace are done in the soul, in making it pure from sin.

CHAPTER V.

1. *A feast.* The passover—which was the principal feast of the Jews, and could be spoken of as by eminence, *the* feast. The events recorded by St. Matthew (chs. iv.–ix.), are to be placed between these two chapters. This feast makes up the *four passovers* of our Lord's ministry, which extended through three years and a half.

2. *The sheep market.* The word *market* is not in the Greek. We may read it as well the sheep gate, spoken of by Nehemiah, iii. 1. ¶ *A pool.* Of Bethesda; doubtless the same as the pool to the north of the temple-site now called Berket-Israel. There are several ancient pools in Jerusalem; deep tanks for water made with large stones and cemented. ¶ *Hebrew tongue.* Hebrew or Syriac language. St. John writes here in the *present* tense. It is thought by some that he indicates by this, that the pool was still to be found among the ruins of the city, at the time he was writing. ¶ *Bethesda.* The house of mercy. The pool was named probably, from the porches, *a house*, while the *mercy* was found in its salutary washings. ¶ *Five porches.* Five arched entrances, ample enough to hold the sick who came there. The number was oc-

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am

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casioned either by the sides of the pool (the present pool has five principal sides) or to divide the sick into as many classes.

3. *Impotent folk.* Sick persons of any and all complaints, clean and unclean. ¶ *Halt.* Lame. ¶ *Withered.* Palsied, with limbs dried up and shrunk, so as to be destitute of vital power. The three diseases here mentioned are incurable. ¶ *Moving of the water.* The signs made by a certain disturbance of the water. This may have been by a gurgling sound, bubbles rising and the like.

4. *An angel.* Probably not appearing *visibly*, but by signs, which the people knew and took advantage of. The great fact which brought the people hither, was, that at certain times changes took place in the water; and immediately after them, *the first* one entering the water was cured of any disease—whether curable or not by human means. St. John relates this account evidently as believing it. Therefore we may set down two facts as beyond dispute. 1. That at times an angel troubled the pool. 2. That the first comer after such troublings was cured. We remark: 1. That the belief of a miracle rests upon the witnesses to it, and is to be received according to their statements. There is no analogy between this mode of cure by miracles and others by natural means. 2. That the explanation of the Fathers is probably the just one; that this occasional miracle, was to prepare the people for giving credit to the works of Christ, who was to be the fountain for all uncleanness, and especially to the work of baptism instituted by Him. How long this pool was thus troubled we have no means of knowing, and need not know, for we cannot tell how long the miracles of the Church were continued. Doubtless all ceased as soon as their design was accomplished, namely, to lead men to believe the spiritual work of Christ. ¶ *At a certain season.* It is an ambiguous word, for it may mean, 1. At any time uncertain. So that the sick people must remain there in order to be present to take advantage of the happy moment. Thus their faith would be put to the test. 2. At fixed seasons, perhaps at the great feasts, when a multitude of people were in Jerusalem and could take due notice of the cures made at the pool. This would prepare the minds of the nation to credit the works of Jesus. ¶ *Of whatsoever disease he had.* Now as there were there blind, halt and withered, it is evident that St. John bids us believe that no disease was incurable by these waters. A miraculous power was given to them; so that they had no analogy to any other waters of the earth, which are found to have only a partial restorative effect upon certain curable complaints. Such waters can never wash out blindness, or bring back the muscle and flesh of a withered arm.

5. *Thirty and eight years.* Therefore the disease began to afflict him several years before the birth of Christ. Collusion between Him and the sick man was therefore impossible. Possibly this marks the period when these waters first became healing. It was the year

coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, [a]Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

a Matt. 9. 6.

10 ¶ The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day: [b]it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

b Ex. 20. 10; Neh. 13. 9; Jer. 17. 1. &c.

that the temple was finished by Herod. So that from the completion of that structure, it would seem that the work of preparing the way of Christ began. It was a weary period to lay there waiting. What wisdom and perseverance of mind this man had manifested. Who but will be grateful if sickness, though long and painful, at last brings him to Christ?

7. *Sir, I have no man, &c.* Poverty was added to disease. He was friendless. Priests and Levites had passed him by; the good Samaritan comes at last to heal him. What a forlorn object was that, which Jesus passed by the rich and learned to have mercy upon, and to bind to Himself! How can any despair, who can for a moment imagine such a scene as this? Humility, want, earnest longing for good; when did God ever pass them by? Often when the heart is weak, in human judgment, then is it strong and ready for grace.

8. *Rise, take up thy bed, &c.* The power to do so was given at the very speaking of this word, and the man felt the vigor of a new life flowing through his veins, and obeyed. Jesus did not call on him for faith, as he had not seen the works nor heard the teachings of Christ. He worked this miracle to show the Jews that whatever might be the power of the angel (which power they confessed), His own was superior. That wrought by means; Jesus cured the man by a word. So that He chose a man older in disease than He was in age; a time when a crowd was present, and a day when a religious scruple concerning the Sabbath would give more publicity to the act, by the very clamors of His enemies. The miracle was open, striking, conclusive of a divine power. Christ now says to sinners, rise and obey. How can they plead *impotence*, when this example is before them? Whatever God requires of any man, He gives him, at the same time, power to perform.

9. *The Sabbath.* This day was holy by strict command. Ex. xx. 8–10; Jer. xvii. 21. It was unlawful to bear any burdens on the Sabbath. Yet Jesus chose it for this miracle. He might have found this man there at any time. He chose that particular time. Why? 1. Because works of mercy are always lawful. They were lawful under the Law, when rightly interpreted. Labors of necessity and charity were never out of place. See Luke xiii. 15, 16; xiv. 5. 2. To call public attention to His claim as Messiah to be Lord of the Sabbath. Thus in a place of mercy, in a crowd, in the scene of angelic miracles, He works one which would cause all the Jews to agitate the two questions together. Is it not a divine work? Is it not the Sabbath? Can a sinner, a wilful Sabbath-breaker, do such works? John ix. 16 and 31. His claims and powers, thus united, were forced on the attention of the Jews. Matt. xiii. 7, 12. 3. To make a claim of Divine right over the Sabbath, as He does below. v. 17. For the Sabbath was partly a moral, partly a positive law; moral, as far as it was made for man; positive, as to its time and manner of observance. As to its positive part, it was to be changed. It therefore was the fittest instrument of all the ritual laws of the Mosaic system, to show His divine power, who claimed entire control over it. Jesus would not violate a purely moral law, for that is always sin. No other ritual law was so solemnly

12 Then they asked him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was; for Jesus had conveyed himself away, ‖a multitude being in *that* place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: [a]sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done

‖ Or, *from the multitude that was.*

a Matt. 12. 45.

guarded as this of the Sabbath. He claimed remarkable powers, when He declared Himself its superior.

10. *Not lawful.* The man probably only thanked God in his heart that it was *possible.* Sickness had given him a Sabbath of near forty years.

11. *He that made me whole.* The One who cured me commanded this, and I was only too glad to obey His word. The man was right, and probably felt that he was so. For if Jesus could work a miracle, it was proof of power from God; and the power supposed the right to obedience, in things not actually sinful.

12. *What man is that, &c.* They must have His name, that they may take vengeance upon Him. Pious people! They make no inquiry of the poor man how he came to have this power, after lying so long before their eyes a cripple, his bed carrying him for thirty-eight long years. They have only a sudden zeal for a law of order, while they trample on all laws of mercy. They have no thanks nor gratitude for such a prophet, but pass by a Divine work, to cavil at its manner. Such is the heart of man. Even in his piety, he is apt to degenerate into formalism and pride, to draw down the curses of Heaven on others, when he needs its greatest mercies for himself.

13. *Wist not.* Knew Him not. ¶ *Had conveyed Himself away.* Had turned aside out of the crowd, which He could easily do, in the man's first emotions of surprise and joy.

14. *Findeth him in the temple.* Met with him, returning thanks to God, as was usual. Luke xviii. 10. It is the mark of faithless and degenerate days, when men do not seek, first of all, the place of God's honor, to return Him thanks for mercies received. Our Church has provided forms of thanksgiving for the great deliverances from danger, which are now granted to men. How few use their privilege, in comparison to the numbers who are delivered from peril. ¶ *Sin no more.* Be careful to guard against the sins of your former days. The season of recovery from great dangers or sickness is the season for this solemn caution. Let each examine himself at such time, and be wise. For we shall all at some time be in a danger that we cannot escape, and alas, if that worse punishment come upon us after death! ¶ *A worse thing.* The Mosaic law among other sanctions, threatened the sinner with diseases. Jesus shows this man that He knew his crime, and the connection between it and his long disease. Thus the man recognized Him as a prophet, and perhaps inquired His name of others. What thing could be worse than his disease, but the second death? This would be his fate, if he yielded again to temptation. So Christians find pardon. They must beware of falling, lest their last end be worse than the beginning.

15. *Told the Jews.* Probably from gratitude, that they might know also the wonderful power of their prophet.

16. *Therefore.* Thereupon; as they heard this from the man. Now the Law directed that Sabbath-breakers should be put to death. Ex. xxxi. 15; xxxv. 2. The precedent for it is found Num. xv. 32–36. In that case, by the express command of the Lord, the man

these things on the sabbath-day.

17 ¶ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also, that God was his Father, [a]making himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus, and

[a] Ch. 10. 30, 33; Phil. 2. 6.

who gathered sticks on that day was stoned to death. Were the Jews then in the right? By no means. They should have examined publicly: 1. The man who carried his bed on the Sabbath. 2. The prophet who commanded him to do so. By a public trial the facts would have been made clear, and these they were unwilling should appear. For it would have come out on trial, beyond all question, that Jesus was inspired by God with such powers, as would have made Him evidently superior to Moses, and able to regulate the customs of the Sabbath. They preferred to gain their ends by unlawful means, fearing the test of their own law, when fairly applied. ¶ *Persecute.* Pursued Him with evil intentions; sought to ruin Him by malicious arts. ¶ *To slay.* Not upon this charge fairly tried, but from hatred to Him, produced by this cause. Jesus did not avoid the trial of the law of Moses. This He could not have done, since His mission was to fulfil all righteousness. And He evidently chose to excite public attention to His claim to be Messiah, by this apparent breach of the Sabbath; knowing that a careful examination of the transaction would establish that claim. His persecutors by their actions confess the same.

17. *Answered them.* Answered those who were clamoring at the deed. ¶ *My Father worketh hitherto.* God works until now. He has never rested from certain labors. He did not rest after the creation of the six days, in the sense in which man rests, as though He needed rest and ceased from all exertion of power. He continued the preservation of the creation, which He had made; a creation whose motion and processes never stay. The sun shines, the rain falls, the worlds roll on, on all days alike. Hence it follows, that the seventh day rest was made for man, that it has no power beyond the firmament; that the Divine Being and the celestial attendants of His glory, cease not day or night from their works of love and power. ¶ *And I work.* This is a claim to equality with God. He, their Messiah, did good on the Sabbath day, that they might learn of Him that He was its Lord. For we may take it for granted that a wilful Sabbath-breaker could not work an undisputed miracle, as is urged by the restored blind man, ch. ix. 16, 31, 32; to which argument the Jewish rabbis could make no suitable reply. Hence the Jews must believe either that it was only a false magic which was used, and so punish Jesus as a transgressor, or they must confess that "if this man were not of God He could do nothing," and listen to His words with faith. They dare do neither, but compromise with their reason, and hate and persecute Him.

18. *The more to kill Him.* They were the more enraged. For this claim of Jesus was either true or it was the greatest impiety. The latter was more than they dared to say; the former they felt to be true, but were too angry and wicked to admit it. ¶ *Said also that God was His Father.* By words and implication. If He founded the claim to break the Sabbath, as He did, on His right to work constantly as God did, then He made God His Father, beyond all doubt. For when an argument is built on right of birth, the right is unquestionable or the argument falls. ¶ *Making Himself equal with God.* If Jesus did not do as the Jews supposed, how easy for Him to have undeceived them, and said, "I make God my Father only as He is yours." But then it would have come back to this, "then why do you do on the Sabbath, that which we are forbidden,

said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [a]The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* [b]even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22 For the Father judgeth no

[a] v. 30; Ch. 8. 28; & 9. 4; & 12. 49; & 14. 10.

[b] Lu. 7. 14; & 8. 54.

for you could have found this man and cured him on any other day?" So that the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son, is not only the plain sense of this passage, but no other sense can be held, which will not shock our reason. For the Jews now considered Him guilty of blasphemy, which was a capital crime. Lev. xxiv. 11–14. If the Saviour did not make Himself God, then how is it, that He suffered, not those fanatic Jews only, but all the Christian world to draw this meaning from His words!

19. *Do nothing of Himself.* And therefore cannot act *contrary* to the Father. Hence the Son could not break the Sabbath which had been given by God, which would imply two wills, differing from each other. But His power came from the Father and His will was the same, so that He was not acting contrary to the Father, but after His example was doing good on the Sabbath day. Now we note: 1. That these words are joined to the last verse and give a reason why He did not break the day of rest, that His will was that of God, and His work an imitation of the Supreme. 2. That He asserts no inferiority of nature to God, but only of the mode of operation. His power was derived from the Father. The Jews said that He made Himself equal with God, probably including the sense that He opposed His will to the Supreme when He broke the Sabbath. Jesus replies: I do nothing of Myself, but act by the model of the Father. That surely is no inferior nature which can speak thus. They are the words of a Divine Being. But there is only one God, as St. John explains it, "the Word was with God, and the Word was God." i. 1. ¶ *What things soever.* All the works of God, creation, preservation, and grace. Heb. i. 3.

20. *For the Father loveth the Son.* Therefore withholdeth nothing from Him, but communicates all power to Him. The language which conveys to our limited minds the ideas of the Adorable Trinity, is, of course, taken from things which are usual with men. For it is impossible for us to form ideas of God, except by the help of such analogies as we now see on earth. We must interpret it carefully and with an eye to other assertions of Scripture, lest we fall into the error of making God such an one as ourselves. The two Persons of the Trinity are the same in substance, equal in power and eternity, differing only in this, that the Father begets but is not begotten, sends but is not sent. ¶ *Greater works than these.* Than this cure of the paralytic man. These greater works are mentioned, raising the dead and the eternal judgment. These works though completed only in the end of all things, would be begun in part among the hearers of these words, that their minds should be filled with wonder, if possible, with faith and love.

21. *As the Father, &c.* We are not to suppose from this, that the Father raiseth some to life and the Son others, for God does all by His Son as an instrument and co-worker. But said to the Jews, it means, that as they read of certain persons raised up to life, in their own records (1 Kings xvii. 22; 2 Kings iv. 32, &c.), and ascribed it to God the Father, so would He who was then present do the same works in His

man; [a]but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. [b]He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto

[a] Matt. 11. 27; & 28. 18; Acts 17. 31; 1 Pet. 4. 5.

[b] 1 John 2. 23.

own right, as in the cases of the widow's son and Lazarus. To us it declares as plainly that the final resurrection of the dead will be wrought by the mighty working of Christ, "whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." Phil. iii. 21. ¶ *Quickeneth.* Gives them life again. These words may refer properly to spiritual life and resurrection from the death of sin, as in the verses which follow. For our Saviour speaks of both kinds of resurrection in this discourse. For eternal life begins with regeneration. Death does not stop it. The resurrection is only a higher development of its glories. There are two uses of the word to *quicken* or raise to life, as applied to the body. 1. The return to this life to be followed by death again, as in the case of Lazarus and others. 2. The final resurrection of the spiritual body to an endless life. 1 Cor. xv. 45. ¶ *Whom He will.* To some here at His own pleasure. For the works of this sort were done by the Saviour in order to the good of believers, not for the merits of the individuals. Hence they were done at His own pleasure and for the final glory of His own Church, which is subject to His will and pleasure. He will call all believers from the silence of the grave. Or in a spiritual sense all who come to Him and love Him, shall be made subjects of His merciful covenant and receive the true life in their souls.

22. *Judgeth no man.* That is, alone, and without the Son, but only with and through Him. Or He now judges, i. e., condemns no man. Judgment is to come hereafter. Judgment will follow the resurrection, and here is declared to be committed to the Son. God was declared to be the Judge of all the earth. Now it is shown that the Father has committed the destiny of the world to the Son, the second Person of the Trinity. No one but an Omniscient Being can judge the earth. It is given to the Son of man, that we may have the more confidence in the mercy shown by Him. Matt. xxv. 31; Acts xvii. 31. ¶ *Committed all judgment unto the Son.* He has made Him King and Judge of all creatures, for there is no judgment which is not put in His power. All things are subject unto Him, as St. Paul reasons, 1 Cor. xv. 27. Therefore He is, by nature, King and Lord over all, God blessed for ever.

23. *Even as.* With the same reverence and adoration. God is described in the law of Moses as a *jealous* God, who will not give His glory to another. The one great sin, the abomination of the Judaic system, was idolatry, the honoring or worshipping any other being as God. And in the last book of Scripture, the angel commands St. John, who offered to kneel to him, a creature, "See thou do it not, &c., *worship God.*" Rev. xix. 10. We do, therefore, surely believe, 1. That no other being than God can be worshipped or adored with equal honor than the One God. 2. That the Son is to be honored, *even as* the Father, therefore is He truly equal with God—a Person in the one substance of the Godhead. He is to be worshipped by prayer and praises as our God and Saviour. By Him we have access to the Father, through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 18. Without faith in Him, and obedience to His laws, we are exposed to the wrath of God. Heb. xii. 29. No language of the Creeds can go beyond this plain declaration of our blessed Lord. We worship Him as "God of God," the Son of the Father.

24. *He that heareth My word.* The word here spoken of is the whole testimony which Christ gave, the Gospel. Men might believe in God without the

you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; [a]but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and

[a] 1 John 3. 14.

Gospel, as the Jews and pagans did. But after Christ came it was necessary that all who heard His declarations and history, should believe them, and enter into the covenant sealed by His blood, in order to be reconciled to God. The word hearing is used in such passages as this for all that follows upon a right hearing, namely, believing and obeying. ¶ *On Him that sent Me.* He might have added, *and on Me*, but leaves it unsaid to remove all occasion of cavilling. Jesus teaches the Jews that from that time, all who approached God, must do so in His name. ¶ *Hath everlasting life.* By these words are understood that state of reconciliation with God, and adoption by Him, which begins here in faith and grace, and reappears after the resurrection in the blessedness of perfect holiness and glory. And while every reader perceives that it refers to that final state in which we shall escape perdition, few are apt to notice the frequency with which our Lord spoke of it as *beginning here.* And it is injurious to piety to neglect this fact. For nothing can have a more powerful effect upon the soul, than to recognize fully the truth that its life has begun, is going on now, and therefore is actually assuming its complexion for all future times. So that by that portion of it which is led in this life of probation, the rest is determined. Death ends the period of probation, and the resurrection brings on the Judgment; but the life in all its great characters, which are found in love for God and piety, continues the same; here trial, there reward of the spiritual principle of love. ¶ *Shall not come into condemnation.* As all others will. All, therefore, who do not enter the Christian covenant, are by nature and actual sins, now in condemnation. This is a doctrine of Scripture and experience. The heathen and Jewish world had solved the problem of original sin. Death reigned over all, and all were concluded under a condemnation of sin. To such a world Christ came to offer reconciliation with God. They then who did not receive His covenant were left under condemnation. ¶ *But is passed, &c.* Has passed already by the new-birth. Is no longer condemned, but lives to God. The Christian state is not merely a condition of moral integrity and gentleness, of certain shining virtues towards men, such as the heathen could reach of themselves, at least in some happy instances. It is a spiritual change wrought by the Spirit of God, in which the primal elements of eternal life are already beginning within the Spirit. So that this change, though conditional on continuance in well-doing, is real and fundamental. At the Judgment it will appear that Christians *have passed* in their new-birth, from death unto life. In this manner, the last sentences of the office for Baptism in the Prayer Book, are to be understood. Rom. vi. 4–7; 1 John v. 20.

25. *The hour.* Limited times are usual in Scripture to mark simply *dispensations.* The Divine economy of the Gospel is here meant. It is at hand. Or the word *hour* may signify the hour or time of its beginning. ¶ *Now is.* Is at the very door, or begins to appear. ¶ *The dead, &c.* He speaks as we see of the resurrection in two senses. 1. Of the spiritual resurrection of the souls of believers; "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 1, 5. So, John xi. 26, Jesus says: "Whosoever *liveth* and believeth in Me *shall never die*," i. e., living believers have already passed from death unto life. This is called the *first resurrection.* Rev. xx. 5. These dead souls hear the voice of the Son of God, and believe, hope,

now is, when [c]the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to

a Eph. 2. 15; & 5. 14; Col. 2. 13.

and live in peace with God. 2. Of the final resurrection of the body. For the open revelation of it, and the terms on which it proceeds, are the glorious doctrines of the Gospel. The miracles of recalling the dead to this life, were comments and explanations of this future change. They whom He recalled heard His voice and obeyed. And He will yet descend from heaven with a shout, which shall summon all who sleep in their graves to meet Him in the air. 1 Thess. iv. 16. ¶ *Shall live.* Spiritually, eternally.

26. *Hath life in Himself.* That is to say, has not a life derived from another and dependent on the will of some other Being. God is the original source of all life, for in Him all creatures "live, move, and have their being." As all proceeded from His creative energy, so all depend upon Him for support. In this is our idea of the difference between God and His creatures. He has the original, they a derived, dependent, and limited life. He gives life inexhaustibly to all; they can only sustain their individual life by His permission. Hence God is the I AM, the Original Being at the centre of all creation. Acts xvii. 28; Ex. iii. 14; John viii. 58. ¶ *So.* So is it a truth that He has imparted this same nature to the Son. We say that one great difference between the ideas of God and creatures, lies in this, that the life of the latter is derived by creation. But while the Scripture declares that the life of the Son is *given* by the Father, the manner of it is beyond our comprehension. It is a truth of the faith that the Father has *begotten the Son.* But it is as strongly to be maintained that the nature begotten is Divine. Therefore it is eternal, uncreated: hence there never was a period when the Son was not, or was not God. Around these truths

the Son to have life in himself;

27 And [b]hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is [c]the Son of man.

b Acts 10. 42; & 17. 31. *c* Dan. 7. 13. 14.

clusters the whole series of Church history and life. But the mind will struggle in vain to grasp more than the expressions of them. Says St. Augustine: "In life are comprehended nature and essence. And the Son, as He hath it, so hath He it given to Him. For the same which is life in both, is essence in both: and the life, i. e., essence which is begotten from life, is born: though *not born unlike the other.* For being life from life, it remains like in nature to its origin." The Nicene creed therefore says: "God of God, Light of Light." In person differing, in substance the same. ¶ *To have life in Himself.* So that He has power to impart it to whom He will, in raising men to spiritual life here, eternal life hereafter.

27. *Hath given Him authority.* Hath delegated to Him to become the Messiah and mediator between God and man This was done: 1. Inasmuch as Scripture ascribes to the Father that right and power which is implied by the words to *give* and to *send* and to *show all things* to the Son. Verses 19–24. 2. As our Saviour warns us by a change of words, *when* the Son became *Son of man.* Note, He has said all along, Son, or Son of God, now He changes the word. This authority of judgment is a part of the *mediatorial* kingdom, and hence it was specially given to Him at the time of His incarnation. ¶ *To execute judgment.* Divine judgment contains the two parts of justifying and condemning or punishing. We are justified by faith in Christ; we are now condemned by unbelief because we do not believe in Him. The times of executing this judgment on the first hearers of the Gospel were two. 1. At the destruction of their city in that same generation. 2. At the end of all things. ¶ *Because He is the Son*

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall [a]come forth; [b]they

a Is. 26. 19; 1 Thes. 4. 16; 1 Cor. 15. 52.

that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do

b Dan. 12. 2; Matt. 25. 32, 33, 46.

of man. For this reason is He the Judge of man. This sublime plan of salvation required this provision. The Son has from the beginning taken the human race into His care; He led them by Moses and the prophets, became man to set them the example of the Divine life, died to redeem them, sent His Spirit to assist them, and "shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead." Phil. ii. 8, 9. The Jews had assurance of this truth from their prophet Daniel; vii. 13, 14. Thus we are certain of justice, for a pure and holy man of our own nature will judge us. We are not to be overwhelmed by power or terror, but can see our doom to be deserved. Rev. xx. 13 We are as sure of mercy, for He who loved to pardon and gently whisper peace to penitent sinners, now dwells in our minds by faith, to confirm our trust of mercy to be found at last. Acts x. 42–43; Heb. iv. 15.

28. *Marvel not at this.* Be not unbelieving because of wonder at this power given to a man whom you can see and know. ¶ *The hour is coming.* He does not now add *and now is* (see verse 25), for He speaks of the last resurrection only. ¶ *All that are in their graves.* All the dead, Jews and Gentiles. All shall hear the voice of Christ and arise to meet Him in the air. The word *graves*, shows exactly His meaning. Before He spoke generally, including the quickening of souls by a life of faith, and the recalling to life of the widow's son, Lazarus and others. Now He speaks plainly of a final resurrection of the whole race. ¶ *Shall hear His voice.* Attended or executed by means of the angels. The trumpet shall sound; the same whose terrific clangor awed the Israelites at the giving of the Law (Ex. xix. 19), shall be heard again at the judgment. At the awful summons the dead will start to life, from the depths of earth and ocean, and the living be changed in a moment into bodies capable of everlasting duration. Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52.

29. *Shall come forth.* Out of their graves, of which raising Lazarus was doubtless a type and example. John xi. 43–44. ¶ *They that have done good.* He says not "they who believe," for two reasons especially. 1. Because all men will be judged by "the deeds done in the body," a doctrine entirely agreeable to the revealed covenant of faith in Christ. For in that day no one will dare to plead works without faith, or be saved by faith barren and dead. 2. Because Jesus speaks here (as in Matthew xxv. 32) of the judgment of *all nations.* Therefore He gives the most general form of the test which will then be made. They who *had done good* applies to all men commonly, while "they who have believed," would be strictly true only of such as have heard of a Saviour. ¶ *Resurrection of life.* Is there a difference of resurrection, two sorts of bodies in which men will rise answering to their spiritual characters? St. Paul reasons thus, for he tells us of a *spiritual body*, raised in glory, the progeny of the last Adam who is a quickening spirit, raised in the likeness of His resurrection: St. John, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, clad in fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints. If this is not the meaning here, then the resurrection of life, is simply, a new life of body and soul in heaven for ever. ¶ *Of damnation.* Or condemnation, or judgment; i. e., to punishment for their evil deeds. 2 Pet. ii. 9. This, which is the most tremendous and fearful truth of Scripture, was reserved for Christ to deliver in its fulness. Our English Scriptures, by confounding two

nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32 ¶ There[a] is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, [b]and he bare witness unto the truth.

a Matt. 3. 17; 1 John 5. 6, 7, 9. *b* Ch. 1. 15, &c.

original words in the one English word *Hell*, have obscured this fact. The word hell in the Old Testament is used for a Hebrew word, which, whatever may be its meaning, differs from our idea of hell, a place of final punishment. And taking due notice of this fact we shall come to a right understanding of the relation of the two covenants. In the latter "life and immortality are brought to light," and along side of them are put death and everlasting punishment. 2 Tim. i. 10. The first covenant was of this earth; the latter looks beyond to the final condition of all men. Heb. xii. 25. The Gospel is therefore final and perfect. It warns us that if we neglect it "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Reader, pause and reflect, on the situation in which you stand. Is this true? Is there this resurrection to life and death? Then what is your hope for it? How are you preparing to meet that Judge of all men? Be wise in time, for the *hour is coming*. Saints desire it. Then sinners will be cut off for ever from hope and the presence of God.

30. *Of mine own self.* As Son of man, i. e. as man, for He has apparently dropped the discourse concerning His nature as Son of God. v. 27. This is very plainly the meaning, though it may apply in the same sense as v. 19, to His Divine nature. Of Himself as Son of God He can do nothing. Now in the words as they stand, there is enough to warn us to seek in what sense He can do nothing; not simply, for this would deny Him a will. He can do nothing in the judgment of Himself, as opposed to, or differing from the Father; therefore He cannot err in judging men. But as judgment is given to the Son of man, and He is discoursing of it, therefore He now says, *as man*, that He can do nothing wrong or unjust. "He is only showing that it was impossible He should ever wish any thing but what the Father wished."—*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *As I hear, I judge.* From the Father. The eternal rule of equity will be the rule of final judgment. ¶ *Because I seek not, &c.* This teaches, 1. That the judgment of Christ will be just, because He does not follow His own will as the Son of man. For the will of man is only sinful when it is set apart from the will of God. To follow the Divine will is, therefore, perfect truth and equity. 2. That the will of Christ is that of the Father. There can be no discrepancy. Therefore His judgments will be sustained by Almighty Power. The saint's rest will be unbroken by a fear of change; the sinner's torment unvisited by a glimmer of hope.

31. *If I bear witness of Myself.* He answers an objection. This had passed into an adage. John viii. 13. So the Romans said, "A man is not to witness in his own case." Perhaps some one said as much, or manifested it by his looks. At least this was in their hearts, and Jesus replies to it by producing those proofs; John the Baptist, His own works, and the Eternal Father. It may be well to supply in sense, "ye say, If I bear," &c. ¶ *Not true.* Can not justly demand your faith. For the word *true* has, in other places, the meaning of credible, worthy of belief. It was necessary that the words of Christ should be so established, that unbelievers should be left without excuse. Faith in assertions is not altogether voluntary. It follows proofs or probabilities of the things asserted being credible. If Jesus had violated so

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 ¶ But I have greater [a]witness than *that* of John: for the[b] works which the Father hath

[a] 1 John 5. 9.

[b] Ch. 3. 2; & 10. 25; & 15. 24.

general a law of nature, the Jews would have had some excuse in refusing to believe His message.

33. *Unto John.* See ch. i. 19–26. John was believed by the body of the nation to have been a prophet. He came in the manner of life, and with the style of teaching, which excited attention, and manifested a mission from God. For although John did no miracle, yet he had that power and influence over men, those definite notions of his own work, which stamped him as truly sent by God. See ch. x. 41; Matt. xxi. 26.

34. *I receive not testimony from man.* This was emphatically true. Though John gave this witness freely, in order that the Jews might believe in Christ, yet in several ways Christ may be said not to have accepted it. 1. He did not desire or ask for it. John gave it spontaneously. 2. He did not need it or build on it. Thus after His baptism, when John gave it, Jesus at once retired into the wilderness for forty days at least. 3. He did not receive it from John or any other *man*, in all those things which made His Gospel Covenant, especially not in those, which had been the subject of this conversation, spiritual new life, judgment and the resurrection. They were peculiarly the revelation of Christ alone. ¶ *That ye might be saved.* Most commentators refer this to the appeal to John. I refer you to him, that you may by your own confidence in his testimony put fath in Me and be saved. May it not refer to the doctrines just advanced? These doctrines I state to you that you may be saved, and though they were not taught to St. John, nor witnessed by him, yet you may believe in them, and find safety.

35. *He was.* John we suppose imprisoned near the end of the year before this. ¶ *Burning and a shining light.* A lamp or lantern, burning strongly, and shining freely to others. The Jews were accustomed to this style of likening a faithful and zealous prophet to a lamp. Zech. iv. 2, 3, 14; Rev. i. 12. The writer's former assertion of John was, "He was not that light" (ch. i. 8), not a source of light, such as Christ was. Now we see him represented under this figure; a borrowed light, *burning*, i. e., filled with zeal and love for his prophetic work, and shining, preaching and instructing all men in the truth; as a lantern guides the feet in the darkness of the night. Ps. cxix. 105. ¶ *For a season.* For a little while, they were willing to follow him. This was a merited rebuke to a fickle and carnal people. So long as John was preaching the coming of their King as a novelty, their carnal imaginations were fired by his words, and pleased with him. But when they discovered that he required of them self-denial, and a mortified life, in patient expectation of the will of God, they grew weary and deserted him. John came "in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not." Matt. xxi. 32. They had no love for that way.

36. *Greater witness.* Testimony which is stronger, more satisfactory. ¶ *The works.* Miracles and all His actions of Divine power. It was a miracle which occasioned this conversation. And many of the miracles of Jesus were called signs, i. e., proofs of Divine power. ¶ *Hath given Me.* Hath given Me power to do. That He could heal the sick, raise the dead, &c. He could not do so by any human power; hence they must confess that the power to do them was given Him. They allowed this, and said it was from Beelzebub. But this folly was too apparent to be defended for a moment. ¶ *To finish.* All things which Christ did, were parts

given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father himself which hath sent me, hath borne

a Matt. 3. 17; & 17. 5; Ch. 6. 27; & 8. 18.

[a]witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, [b]nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

b Deut. 4. 12, 17; 1. 17; 1 John 4. 12.

of one perfect plan of redemption foreordained from the foundation of the world, and finished by Him. Hence on the cross He exclaimed, "*It is finished.*" Here He speaks of this whole work by implication; for this He was sent to finish. So that we build our faith not only on His works (miracles) such as the Jews saw, but on the perfectness of His wisdom, the holiness of His life, the exact fulfilment of prophecies, and the unity of design in His history, which a mere man could never have conceived nor executed. Added to this, His works since the ascension testify the same; the spread of Christianity, its suitableness to human nature, and last, not least, the joy and peace in believing, by which the Spirit bears witness to each regenerate soul, that it is one of the sons of God.

37. *The Father Himself.* In many ways. 1. By the law and the prophets, to whose authority Jesus refers below. V. 39. These were not human voices, but in their sublimer parts prefaced by, Thus saith the Lord. They foretold the Messiah. 2. At His baptism by a voice from heaven. Matt. iii. 17. 3. By the miracles, which were a Divine testimony. ¶ *Ye have neither heard His voice.* This must refer either to a hearing with the senses or with the mind. It would seem to signify the former. For that God had been heard speaking from heaven, and testifying to His truth, seems to have been just referred to. And three times this voice was heard in this generation. Still it is possible that those present had not heard this supernatural voice, nor seen the shape in which the Spirit appeared. So that Jesus may refer to a maxim established among all thinking men, that God has not parts and senses such as men have. And he may thus assert by way of parenthesis. God did bear witness of Me, though your maxim is that He is not heard or seen by men. For thus God appeared to Moses. Numb. xii. 8. But if Jesus speaks of that inward hearing, of the conscience, then He seems to say, Ye do not believe Me, not for any want of evidence; God is testifying of me. Do you ask *how?* By that manner which He commonly uses, the inward witness of your own reasons and consciences. He needs no other method, for He is not heard and seen by the senses, that He should speak and appear to you, but by the soul. But this evidence you stifle, and have not His word abiding in you. "It is not by the carnal ear, but by the spiritual understanding, through the grace of the Holy Spirit that God is heard. And they did not hear the spiritual voice, because they did not love and obey Him. Nor saw they His shape, inasmuch as it is not to be seen by the outward eye, but by faith and love."—*Alcuin.* The verse is confessedly difficult.

38. *His word abiding in you.* "You have not that character which the word of God produces." Otherwise they would have followed the precepts and practices of the law spiritually, and have been prepared to welcome Christ. Imagine one who had *this word abiding in him,* say King David. How perfect to his mind would have been the proof that Jesus was the Messiah. Sin shuts up and blinds the spiritual faculties, and we become blind to the light which could save us. ¶ *For whom He hath sent.* God had sent Him to answer those cravings of humanity after peace with Him. He had foretold His coming, made it necessary for them, yet they rejected Him.

39. *Search the Scriptures.* This is again a testimony to Christ. The word

39 ¶ [a]Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: [b]and they are they which testify of me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

41 I receive not honour from men.

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

44 How can ye believe, which

a Is. 8. 20; & 34. 16.

b Deut. 18. 15, 18; Lu. 24. 27; 1 Thes. 2. 6.

rendered *search* may be either a command to search or simply an assertion, ye search. The Jews did seek eagerly in their Scriptures for support to the doctrine of eternal life, as their contention with the Sadducees, among other things, made it necessary. But they could not find it there, except as they found it in connection with Christ. For that salvation and life is to be found there now, only as joined to types and shadows of the Shiloh. ¶ *The Scriptures.* The Old Testament—not the New. The latter was not written and was never allowed by the Jews. ¶ *In them ye think ye have eternal life.* 1. Either they supposed that by the study of them and skill in them they would merit the reward of life. Such was the proud error of those whom St. Paul rebukes. Rom. ii. 17–19. The Jews were superstitious in their reverence for the mere knowledge of the law, which only condemned them so long as they did not practise as they learned. 2. They hoped for eternal life in *keeping the law*, which was impossible, without the spirit of that law, which is faith in Christ. Rom. viii. 2, 3. And the error which shut their eyes to their need of *a Saviour*, was this notion, that in the study of their law, and in obedience to its ritual, they should have eternal life. Therefore they would not find the Saviour of their souls in the Scriptures, but only a splendid Messiah, after their carnal imaginations. ¶ *Testify of Me.* By types, ordinances, and by prophecies in a continued series.

40. *Ye will not come, &c.* They were *dead* to their spiritual wants, blind to their dangers. They supposed all would be pardoned to them. 1. Either because they were Abraham's seed and so of a nobler caste than other nations, or 2, by the ready help of their sacrifices and washings in the temple, which should atone for their sins and make them clean. Yet their law demanded a clean heart and a right spirit, and their prophets revealed a new covenant of spiritual righteousness. Of this they knew nothing and were deceived. They did not confess any need of a Saviour, and so came not to Him.

41, 42. *Honor from men.* "I do not come and discourse with you and work miracles before you, to establish a temporal kingdom, such as ye look for." Jesus strikes at that carnal error which was in their hearts, that stumbling-block over which the nation fell, the desire for a glorious conqueror and a material paradise during His reign. So that this assertion is meant to call them off from this false notion to the true. If He had desired or received honor from men, He would have satisfied them better. ¶ *Love of God.* That love for God, which opens the eyes to the sinful heart and its needs, and makes the spiritual kingdom of Christ, the one thing desirable.

43. *I am come, &c.* Jesus now contrasts His kingdom with that of impostors, who sought honor from men. He came to save the souls of men. His mission was only to this end. Human applause, splendor, lofty temples, gold and armies were only impediments. They called men's minds from the one truth. He would have none of them, but came only in the name of God, trusting in Him and conquering by the influences which that faith gave Him, a willing people. ¶ *In his own name.*

receive honour of one another, and seek not the [a]honour that *cometh* from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is [b]*one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for [c]he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

a Rom. 2. 29. b Rom. 2. 12.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER these things Jesus went over to the sea of Gali-

c Gen. 3. 15; & 12. 3; & 18. 18; & 22. 18; & 49. 10; Deut. 18. 15, 18; Ch. 1. 45; Acts 26. 22.

As many impostors and false Christs did. They aimed to set up a temporal kingdom, hence gathered men to themselves by the very means which Jesus rejected; were popular for a time, and at last ruined all who followed them.

44. *How can ye believe, &c.* Here is the knot unravelled. They who were carnally minded sought carnal things, sought honor from each other, i. e., worldly goods. They would not, nay, so long as they had continued this, they could not understand the spiritual blessings which came from God.

45, 46. *Do not, &c.* "I am not your enemy and accuser." Moses, in whom they trusted, would convict them of sin from the book of the law for refusing to listen to that Prophet of whom he wrote, and for whose coming he prepared the way by the covenant of the law. Deut. xviii. 15.

47. *If ye believe not his writings.* The Book of the Law, the first five books of our Bibles. Astonishment must have filled their minds to hear this. They imagined that they only and chiefly believed Moses and understood him. Yet it is plain to us, that a *veil was upon their hearts* in reading him, as St. Paul elegantly reasons. 2 Cor. iii. 14. Moses, he says, put a veil on his face, when he came down from Sinai, i. e., not only did he do so, but he concealed the glory of his visions of Christ under types and allegories. "But their (the Jews) minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ." They looked not through the letter to catch the glory partly hidden, and so their minds were blinded. And the Apostle urges that "the Lord is that Spirit," which interprets the Law of Moses, and constitutes its true end for the righteousness of mankind. So that if the Jews did not receive the spirit of their own law, they could neither have eternal life nor believe in the words of Christ. Both Testaments are united in indissoluble union, making a perfect whole. And to the spiritual mind as the poet says,

> "From Eden's loss unto the end of years,
> From east unto the west the
> SON OF MAN appears."

CHAPTER VI.

1. *After these things.* About a year had passed. In the mean space we put chapters VI.—IX. of St. Luke's Gospel. The last chapter records an event happening at the feast (verse 1), which we suppose to have been the Passover. This chapter speaks of the next Passover (verse 4) as nigh. St. John the Baptist had just been beheaded by Herod Antipas. ¶ *Went over the sea.* To the east side of it, into the dominions of Herod Philip. He went to Bethsaida "to rest awhile." The same events are recorded by the other evangelists. Matt. xiv. 13–21; Mark vi. 32–44; Luke ix. 10–17.

2. *A great multitude.* Jesus went privately by ship, but the people were under great excitement at this time and followed Him. It is a critical period of His life; for there was at this juncture every prospect, humanly speaking, of an outbreak of His friends against the cruel Herod and the Romans.

4. *The Passover nigh.* The multi-

lee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followeth him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the [a]passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 ¶ [b]When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

6 (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, [c]Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes; [d]but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. (Now there was much grass in the place.) So the men sat down in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they

a Deut. 16. 1, &c. *b* Matt. 14. 14, &c. *c* Num. 11. 21, 22. *d* 2 Kings 4. 43.

tude was the greater as they were on the move toward Jerusalem. See note Matt. xxvi. 2–17. This is the only miracle which St. John relates in common with the rest of the evangelists, and he is more circumstantial than the others.

4. *To prove him.* To try his faith, or advance in knowledge of his Master, i. e., whether he would look to Him for a supply, or be puzzled only as to how and where to purchase the requisite quantity.

12. *That nothing be lost.* 1. This shows the truth and greatness of the miracle, that the residue of the food, after such a feast, was beyond the original substance. 2. It gives incidentally a lesson of frugality in our charity. Jesus gave proof of His beneficence in feeding all present; of His care for the future, in preventing waste of the remainder. And He taught the disciples, that this was done only as a miracle, not as a constancy. And again, the miracle prepared the way for the sublime doctrine which follows, which last lesson gave St. John occasion to record it after the rest had done the same. It is an introduction to the doctrine which follows.

14. *That Prophet.* Deut. xvii. 15. It was the greatness of the supply in regard to the numbers who were fed, which extorted this confession. Miracles done at a bedside or a grave, strike the carnal mind less than such as are wrought on an extensive scale. This miraculous power of providing food at will would comport well with the career of One who claimed to be a king. His followers could never be in want.

15. *Take Him by force.* By making

had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth [a]that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 And when even was *now* come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 ¶ The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one wherein his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto

[a] Gen. 49. 10; Deut. 18. 15, 18.

an open outbreak and claiming Him as their leader. They could not *force* Him, but could, by a rebellion, effect their object and implicate Him in it. This was then the culminating point of our Lord's ministry, so far as the question of His temporal reign was concerned. Had He been ambitious, carnal, a man seeking power, here was the scene and the moment, so far as we can judge, in which to raise His standard of revolt, and go forth conquering and to conquer. Here was the temptation. An oppressed and down-trodden people called on Him to be their king. Glorious visions of a paradisiac reign elated even His chosen disciples. These hopes He must crush; this people He must send to their homes, and refuse the proffered crown. He was to feed men with far other bread, to lead, as the Captain of their salvation, a far different host. And we may trace hereafter the effect of this refusal. "From this time *many* of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." Verse 66.

16–21. See notes, Matt. xiv. 22–33; Mark vi. 45–52. This lesson taught the twelve their dependence on Jesus, the folly of seeking to guide and save themselves without Him. It mortifies the wild wishes which had filled their hearts.

21. *Immediately.* Probably not by any miraculous agency. It shows only that while alone they labored in vain and in peril; with His presence all danger ceased and their journey was prosperous. ¶ *Whither they went.* Or wished to go; to Capernaum.

22. *On the other side.* The sea, rather lake, of Galilee, is but some five miles wide, so that objects of any size could be seen across it, and the rest of the multitude could probably see the boat in which the disciples had gone away, drawn up on the shore at the northern end of the lake. ¶ *Jesus went not, &c.* For after forcing them to embark, He had gone into a mountain alone to pray. Verse 15. Mark vi. 46.

23. *Came other boats.* After His disciples had left. These had not left again. So that the people probably

the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 ‖Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: [a]for him hath God the Father sealed.

‖ Or, *Work not.*

a Matt. 3. 17; & 17. 5; Acts 2. 22; 2 Pet. 1. 17.

concluded that He had gone round by land, or was concealed. They seek the disciples, as the surest means of finding Him again. ¶ *From Tiberias.* This town stands to this day, as it did then, on the southern border of the lake. It is now called *Tabariyeh.* It was built by Herod Antipas, in honor of Tiberius the emperor. It was the principal city of Galilee, being favorably situated for the commerce of that region. After the fall of Jerusalem it became the seat of a famous Jewish academy of learned men called the Masorites. An ancient church still exists, built probably in the fourth century, called the "house of Peter." It is sixty miles north-north-east of Jerusalem.

26. *Not because, &c.* "Not that ye saw the true design of the miracles, which were to teach you spiritual truths." The truth taught by this last miracle He proceeds to explain to them, in order to call them off from their worldly thoughts. It was "the meat which endureth unto everlasting life," which He would have them seek. "He fills their souls with His word, whose bodies He had satisfied with bread."—*St. Augustine.* But they, carnal and fickle, are more eager for the loaves and fishes. Thus it is with the whole race. Religion is unattractive to men because it offers spiritual joys, and requires self-denial in worldly gratifications.

27. *Labor not.* Be not over-anxious. Make your highest labor not for this world. Diligence and industry in their places, are not only the duties but the necessities of man. Nor would our Lord discourage them; but by a mode of speech familiar with all men He heightens the contrast between the value of each, by an apparent denial of the one sort. Otherwise He says: "Seek first the kingdom of God; labor for it, and all these things shall be added unto you." ¶ *The meat which perisheth.* "which perishes in the using." Col. ii. 22. The appetite returns, the need of sustenance recurs, and that which supported us yesterday, or last week, has perished. It is put elegantly for this worldly state in general. Labor not for its pleasures. ¶ *That meat which endureth.* Like the *living* water, gives no after-pang of hunger or thirst. Spiritual joy and faith, the words of God, these are the support of men, these give them enduring pleasures. Rom. xiv. 17. ¶ *To everlasting life.* Thus again we see everlasting life beginning here, in the reception of the privileges and doctrines of the Holy Gospel. The obedience to Christ carries us through life happily, and endures to all ages beyond. ¶ *Son of man shall give unto you.* To common people Jesus offers His grace under such symbols as they could best appreciate. He was to give them the covenant by which they could be saved. And now while their minds are bent on the carnal meaning of the miracle which they had just seen, He calls them off to contemplate the Di-

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, [a]This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

[b] 1 John 3. 23.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 [c]Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, [d]He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

[c] Ex. 16. 15; Num. 11. 7. [d] Ps. 78. 24, 25.

vine mysteries of grace, that He was to give them eternal life, and to give it by means of His body as the instrument. ¶ *Sealed.* The seal of a king upon any document is its witness, and gives it the value of authenticity. Thus God had so testified to the power and truth of the Son of man, as a king does, who sends his ambassadors under his hand and seal. To this day among the Eastern people the firman of the monarch is devoutly revered. The seal of God, which Jesus had offered to their eyes, was the evident answer to His acts of prayer and blessing, in the multiplication of the bread.

28. *Work the works of God.* In order to do those things which would make men acceptable to God. This is the question of men who saw partly the design of Jesus, and were anxious to do such things as were required by true religion. For by *the works of God* they expressed their idea of religion, which in their age, and in all previous ages, had been employed mostly in works of sacrifice and public rituals.

29. *This is the work of God.* This is the service of God; not works of public religion in temples and at altars only, but one which will find you at all times and under all circumstances. ¶ *Believe.* This faith in the Messiah was the one work of their time. For upon that faith would depend their conduct towards Him, their acceptance of His covenant and regeneration by the Spirit. The same is true of faith always, that it is the instrument of justification and the guide to the graces of the Gospel. Our Lord here calls *faith, the work of God.* It is a work wrought by the Spirit, and the source of all works of righteousness in man.

30. *What sign showest Thou.* Strange that they who had just before been fed by miracle, should ask for a sign. But it seems, from several incidents of the Gospel history, that the Jews expected at the coming of the Messiah, certain dazzling, wonderful signs to appear in heaven, or to join heaven to earth by an evident link and order of events. So when Satan placed Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple, that He might cast Himself down, it would seem that the tempter acted in accordance with the notion of the people, that the Messiah would come down from heaven in some such manner. See ch. vii. 27; Matt. xii. 38. So they would now have some splendid sign from heaven, which could not be gainsaid. Sinners cannot value the signs of grace in them until they turn their eyes inward, and learn how much greater is the miracle of the true bread there found, than all the pomp of outward circumstances.

31 *Our fathers.* Ancestors under Moses. ¶ *Did eat manna.* Ex. xvi. 13, 14. The word manna means *something given*, and was so called by the Israelites in their surprise, "for they wist not what it was." They had seen nothing like it on earth, knew it at once as a prodigy, and ascribed it to the mercy of the God who led them. So they were at a loss how to describe it. "Behold when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay *a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost* on the ground." Again they say, "it was *like coriander seed, small and white*, and the taste of

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, that

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it was like wafers made with honey." v. 31. And as they knew nothing of such a substance before, they gave it a name meaning, *the gift!* So that it is inept to discuss, as some do, the medicinal resin of the shops, which now goes by the same name, a name apparently given to it, because it is white and found in the deserts of Arabia, but having no more relation to the manna of Scripture than the diseases which it alleviates medicinally, have to the hunger of a whole nation of strong men. ¶ *As it is written.* In Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25. The simple peasants recite the psalm, with which they were familiar from their often chanting it in their service. ¶ *Bread from heaven.* It was so called by Moses. Ex. xvi. 15, 29. It came down from the region of the air, the lower heaven, and appeared after the dew evaporated, as if deposited by it. As Moses had (as they supposed) effected so much for their ancestors, could not the Messiah do as much, or more, for His followers? Could He not give them such abundance of food, as to make it certain to them that in following Him, they should suffer no hunger or want? This was indeed to follow Jesus for the loaves and fishes, which they had seen.

32. *That bread from heaven.* Moses did not give it, as he says himself. God gave it. But it was not *the* bread, i. e. *the true bread,* or that which alone can satisfy the soul. This too Moses had revealed for the instruction of the Israelites. For he says: "He fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that *He might make thee to know* that *man doth not live by bread only,* but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deut. viii. 3. Our Saviour then spake a language perfectly intelligible to the readers of the law when He made the same contrast between this aerial (but material) bread and *that bread,* i. e., the true spiritual obedience to the word of God. Other passages of the Old Testament are to the same purpose. For instance, true wisdom was likened to the eating of food. Prov. ix. 5; Is. iv. 2; Ecclus. xxiv. 21. ¶ *My Father giveth you.* God gives it now, evidently, by indubitable proofs. The material food was useful only for an ignorant age. God now gives a loftier proof of His love. ¶ *The true bread.* The true wisdom, that which teaches the whole will of God towards men. This language is continued throughout the discourse, and touches on the various senses in which the word *bread* is used in Scripture. 1. Simple evangelical wisdom, or the Gospel covenant, as in this verse. 2. The Son of God who provided this covenant, v. 35, 48. 3. His great act of giving His body as a propitiation for the sins of the world, v. 51. 4. The eucharistic eating of the sacramental symbols of that sacrifice of atonement, v. 53–56. 5. That spiritual renewal of the soul, which runs through and combines all these into true spiritual life, v. 63.

33. *Bread of God.* It is no longer manna a perishable substance, but spirit, it is the Son of God who is now teaching the world the true wisdom. ¶ *Into the world.* Not to one nation, as before to the Israelites, but to all who believe on Him. He renews their life, gives them power to escape sin, breathes into them a new life unto holiness and hope.

ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, [a]I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, [b]not to do mine own will,

[a] Matt. 24. 24; 2 Tim. 2. 19; 1 John 2. 19.

[b] Matt. 26. 39.

35. *I am the bread of life.* "You ask bread from heaven. I give it. I am God's gift that you may have life." Thus does Jesus reply to their request for a *sign*, and not in vain. For it is certain that all who followed Him, found the true life, rejoiced in it, and now live for ever. ¶ *Shall never hunger.* See John iv. 14. Shall never know again the pain of a soul tormented by fear of the anger of God.

36. *Seen me, and believe not.* Jesus said as much, v. 26. For to draw no higher desire from His presence than such a carnal wish for support in temporals, to have no perception of His true character as able to save them from sin, was indeed to "see Him and believe not." They saw His body, His miracles, His life, but looked only to a low, useless acquisition of an earthly kingdom.

37. *All.* In Greek, *every thing*, in the neuter gender. It is rather to give us a more general idea of who are meant; every individual, every soul. ¶ *The Father giveth me.* All men are given to Jesus, since He died for all. But in a more special sense He now says this of a giving, in which He should not be without followers. The Jews did not believe on Him. Would His kingdom therefore fail? By no means, for it was founded on the immutable purposes of God. Hence, they who would listen, choose and obey Him, would come to Him. But Jesus does not represent His kingdom as dependent solely on the will of sinful men, for then it would be fluctuating and frail. Therefore He places its success in the will and eternal purpose of God. Neither does He here exclude the free will of men, as though only a certain number of celestial peers could enter it, for then they who refused Him would have been guiltless. But He says such as God has given will come (by their free choice) to Him. God gives to all who hear the Gospel *preventing* grace by which they may believe it and be saved by it. If they do not improve it, His justice goes no farther to force them to heaven. Jesus was here speaking to plain men, and if we can free our minds (hoc opus est!) from sectarian prejudices, we may derive the sense of this passage, as honorable to the sovereignty of God, as it is free from *isms* of all sorts. Grotius says: "*The preparations of faith*" (this preventing grace, right use of reason, freeness from prejudice docility, &c.) "are usually attributed to the Father: the *actual operation* of faith to the Son, and the *sealing* thereof to the Spirit." ¶ *Shall come to me.* Of their free will, influenced and aided by the grace, which follows hearing the Gospel in all men who are docile. "You Jews will reject me, but the election will pass by your nation, destroy your covenant, and pass unto all the nations of men, that all who come to me shall be saved." ¶ *Him that cometh.* All who come, of whatever rank or nation. For it was not in the mind of a Jew to conceive that any of his people could be cast out. Jesus provides for the comfort of people and nations of every age, none can be rejected who come aright. All men may find grace to come, if they will. Therefore if they do not, it is (and to this all orthodox Christians must come at last) because *they will not.* ¶ *Cast out.* As if out of a house or kingdom. The covenant is free to all. None—sinner, poor, desolate, bond or afflicted though he be—need fear. "The expression *that the Father giveth me*, shows that *it is no accident* whether a man believes or not, and that belief is not the work of human cogitation, but requires a revelation from on high and a mind devout enough to receive the revelation. Not that they are free from blame, whom the Father does not give, for they are deficient in that which lies

but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

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in their own power, *the will to believe.*" —*St. Chrysostom.*

38. *I came down.* Thus does He speak now of His work of atonement as an act of His own will, which was also the sending of the Father, that His hearers may know that which most of all is important to man to know, that the hopes which were built on His word, were sustained by the power of the Almighty. The will of both Father and Son were the same. Christ came down from heaven to do this will, that all should be saved who believe. See John v. 30.

39. *The Father's will.* That will of God which Christ was to make manifest to the world. Is it not a will of mercy to all mankind? 1. That none should be lost, by any cause secret to himself, who puts his sole trust in Christ. 2. That all who see and believe may be saved. 3. That all such shall be infallibly raised up at last. ¶ *Of all which.* No one of all the number can be lost, by any want of power and authority in the Saviour. ¶ *I should lose nothing.* It was more necessary in the opening of the amazing mercy of the Gospel than it may seem to be now, to convince all men who listened to it, that there could be no failure or weakness in the Divine strength upon which it was built. Hence we hear these repeated assurances that Christ will lose no soul that trusts in Him. They leave entirely untouched the question whether the soul may not fall from grace at all times by its own will. ¶ *But should raise it up.* Death shall not defeat His purposes of mercy. A certain proof of His care during the season when they lie in the grave. ¶ *At the last day.* They who heard Him had been taught by their rabbis that the first (and as they thought the only) coming of the Messiah would be the last day, and would be ushered in by the resurrection of all the ancient saints. They listen therefore to strange words, when Jesus overturns this opinion and teaches them of another coming and a future day.

40. *Every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him.* The meaning of the words concerning the giving men to Christ is explained. None could say that they had no power to come, that they were not of the number to whom it was given to do so: for all who see and believe can do so. In this age hearing the news of the Gospel is to be put in place of seeing Him, as St. Paul says: "How shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. x. 14. They cannot do it. But many who see and hear the Gospel, still do not believe, for they do not make use of the faculties and privileges which are given them by God, and are guilty for the want of the good will which they may have by a right use of grace given. Mr. Barnes says rightly, "Jesus teaches men to strive to enter heaven as if they could do the work themselves; and yet to depend on the help of God, and give the glory to Him as if He had done all." For after the word *themselves* we would add *by the grace given them*, and then

44 No man can [a]come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 [b]It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

a Can. 1. 4.

b Is. 54. 13; Jer. 31. 34; Mic. 4. 2; Heb. 8. 10; & 10. 16.

conclude that such is the true doctrine of Scripture and right reason, but not Calvinism. By grace all have the power, and the promise of grace is made free and unlimited to all living men.

44. *No man can come to me.* "Murmur not. You do not come to me for a plain reason. You see no want of such a Saviour as I am. You cannot ask for my doctrine until you see that you are in a greater need of salvation, than you have yet any notion of." ¶ *The Father draw him.* How draw him? By any mysterious influence confined to a few? Certainly it is not said here, but we are to seek for the meaning of these words, in those preparations for faith, which we recognize as common among men. The idea that any man can choose to believe at any moment, is a very false one. For he must recognize as great facts certain truths which lie at the basis of religion. 1. That he is a sinner, not merely by the words of Scripture, but by the words of *the soul.* One revelling at a feast or with dissipated companions, or in a delirium of excitement, is not able to say, I see and know this. Let him see himself as he is, a lost sinner. And 2. He must feel that Christ offers Himself as the Saiviour of such sinners, before he can determine "I will arise and go to my Father." Now all that goodness of God which leads to repentance, the means of grace, the teaching of the word, the family and social influences, the *reflection* of the soul itself, are the "cords of a man," by which God draws us and prepares us for the new birth. We can at any time begin the course by means of these, especially of reason and meditation, using the lamp of the Scriptures, and depending on such prayer as we feel to be necessary to us. And though we could not step by our strength to the blue heavens above us, we can begin to ascend the ladder built by grace which carries the soul to the abodes of bliss. So says the tenth Article of religion. "We have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us," (i. e., going before us, drawing us, as it is ready to do with all,) "that we may have a *good will,* and *working with us* when we have that good will." Repent, then, reader, and resolve to be *drawn* by such grace as is in you and around you. Fear not; the moment you are earnest you will be aided. Awake, arise, and Christ shall give thee light.

45. *In the prophets.* In that book which was called by the Jews the *prophets.* The Jews divided Scripture into three parts, the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. These words are found in Isaiah liv. 13. But we would also add, as bearing upon the same truth, those passages of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, which foretell the new covenant written in the heart. Jer. xxxi. 34; Ezek. xi. 19; Mic. iv. 2. ¶ *Be taught of God.* In the new covenant: hence we learn how men are now *drawn* by Him. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. x. 17. It removes any idea of limit: *all* shall be taught, and drawn, though some may refuse to obey.

46. *Not that any man hath seen the Father.* No one is to go astray and search after some visible sign of the presence of God with him. This prevents all private interpretation and peculiar states, and sends every one to the regular teaching which God gives us, which is found in His word and the ordinances of religion. "In our doings, that will of God is to be followed which we have expressly declared unto

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh,[a] which I will give for the life of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [b]Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

a Heb. 10. 5, 10.

b Matt. 26. 26, 28.

us in the word of God."—*Art. XVII.* ¶ *Save He which is of God.* Christ Himself, who has declared finally the faith by which we may be saved. ¶ *Hath seen.* Hath known Him entirely and fully. We must rest then upon His communication of the will of God, and not seek for another.

49. *Your fathers did eat manna.* The former gift was for a season, and it had no power beyond the other food of this earth. Though it came from the air, it was material, and its effects only earthly and transient. ¶ *And are dead.* It could not preserve them; why do you seek it again, when a spiritual and life-giving food is offered?

51. *Is my flesh.* My body offered in sacrifice will be the means of your receiving the true life. Our Lord now touches on the great doctrine of the Redemption. He speaks to them by a metaphor and obscurely, because it was not His purpose to reveal the crucifixion openly. They must wait for more light. He had not yet begun to instruct the disciples in regard to it. "By bread is here meant wholesome doctrine and faith, and faith in Him or His body, for these are the preservatives of the soul."—*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *Life of the world.* For the salvation of the souls of all men in all nations who will believe. This life is, that all who believe in Him and are joined in covenant with Him, are brought to repentance, and saved from the evils of the second death, from sin here, and its punishment hereafter.

52. *How can a man, &c.* Behold how Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman and the disciples, in their turn fell into this same error of interpreting spiritual things carnally. Chs. iii. 4; iv. 11, 32. This same specious question, *how*, is still perplexing men. We should believe facts and truths, and leave the manner, where God has left it, in obscurity.

53–55. *Except ye eat, &c.* These verses are allowed by all to refer to the *sacrifice on the cross*, and to teach that a spiritual union of the believer with the sacrificed Saviour, here marked by the words, *eat* and *drink*, is necessary to salvation. The further allusion in them to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which is, if any thing, more plainly made in the peculiar form of the words, is disputed. For the eating flesh and drinking blood have a strange sound, except as we give them the

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, [a]dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

a John 3. 24; & 4. 15, 16.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 [b]*What* and if ye shall see

b Mark 16. 19; Acts 1. 9, Eph. 4. 8.

same meaning as they have received in the sacrament. Matt. xxvi. 26–28; 1 Cor. xi. 24–27. But can the sacrament have a meaning for these or any such words, except as it looks wholly away to that sacrifice and is identified with it? It is better to avoid these distinctions. He who beholds the crucified Saviour as his only hope and dependence, and in the sacrament of the Eucharist learns how rightly to discern the Lord's body and to show forth His death, feeding only after a spiritual manner upon His flesh and blood, by an increasing conquest over sin, has an understanding of the words of Christ which will avail him in all situations. ¶ *Is meat indeed.* Is true food, spiritual edification, opposed to the perishable manna of the Israelites.

56. *Dwelleth in Me.* If such a kind of union as this were possible, after a fleshly manner, it would be the closest conceivable. But the language gives us the assurance of a spiritual union with Christ which is as close, so that the saint becomes one with Him in will and holiness, one, in a final salvation by Him in heaven. The saint dwelleth in Christ, as St. Paul has said: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. iii. 3. All the hopes and thoughts of the true Christian are ruled and governed by the presence of the Spirit of Christ with him. ¶ *I in Him.* I am present by the gifts of the Holy Spirit in his soul, to keep and guide him by the Spirit here, and save him hereafter by the resurrection to eternal life.

57. *I live.* See note, ch. v. 26.

58. *Live for ever.* After the power of the Spirit, an endless life. Jesus had refused their temporal kingdom. How glorious is the Messianic reign which He substitutes.

60. *Of His disciples.* Not of the twelve, but of such as followed Jesus as common learners of His doctrine. We may remember that Jesus chose the twelve, probably out of a larger number of followers for the time. See Mark ii. 18. ¶ *A hard sayiag.* Inexplicable or incredible. The metaphor is taken from things which are rough to the touch, and implies that these persons were offended as well as perplexed. ¶ *Who can hear it?* Hear and understand it, or hear it patiently. They either wholly mistook Jesus, as promising His flesh to be eaten by them after a carnal sort, which was a stupid error; or they were conjecturing in vain what His meaning could be, or how it could agree with their prejudices about the Messiah. They were for having no mysteries in religion. That which was too lofty for their minds, was offensive. They neither ask for explanation, nor wait to study deeper into the matter.

62. *What and if, &c.* If this is so difficult, which is all done here on earth, this spiritual partaking of the benefits of my atonement, what if I tell you of heavenly things, of the ascension into heaven? Our Lord now reasons with

the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 It is the Spirit[a] that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the

a 2 Cor. 3. 6.

them as He had done with Nicodemus, contrasting "heavenly things" with earthly. John iii. 12, 13. Here too the design is to warn them to hear Him with their minds set upon a spiritual sense in His words. And ascending up on high, He would bear with Him His body, so that it was plain He did not mean to give it to them for food.

63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth.* It is the soul which giveth life to the body. So the Spirit alone can give life to your spirits. Hence He bids them to take the language in a spiritual sense. For any other interpretation of them was gross and dark, but, if they would receive it in the true sense, it would soon appear to them as useful. There was a reason for some obscurity. For as it was necessary for the Jews to *wait* for the crucifixion and ascension before they could understand that it was spiritual doctrine of which He spake, and Jesus could not tell them plainly of His death, for reasons of His own, there was needed in them docility and patience, till the spirit of His words should quicken their souls to faith. This they had not, and would not *wait* for, and turned back. ¶ *Quickeneth.* Makes one live, and fills the mind with true knowledge. ¶ *The flesh.* The eating and drinking of food and fluids, such as they were thinking of, had no profit in religion. It was an error of the age, that such things were thought to have a use in piety. See Mark vii. 15; 1 Tim. iv. 3, 8. These we believe profit nothing in the spiritual discipline, but are simply innocent, if received with thanksgiving and in moderation; but the Jews held opinions concerning food which doubtless had their influence upon these hearers and misled them. ¶ *They are spirit.* They are of deep spiritual meaning, and can profit if pondered rightly. The words of Jesus are inspired. 1st, In the sense that they are the revelation of eternal truth, and contain no errors. 2d. That these words are the outward symbols by which the Spirit of God acts upon our spirits. We read them; they are as other words, only far more certain. We devoutly meditate upon them, and the light beams from the dark characters, like the ray of the light-house at evening or in the rifts of a storm, which points the sailor his direction over the pathless sea. ¶ *Are life.* Are able, by God's assistance, to give the true life of the soul, faith, hope and charity.

64. *Knew from the beginning.* For "known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts xv. 18. And known to Jesus was all that was in man. Ch. ii. 25. This omniscience is a necessary power in the One who is the Saviour of sinners, for by this, we believe that He knows all things, the wants we have and the certain remedy of them. ¶ *Went back.* Thus ended their ambitious desire to make Jesus a king. The crowd fell away, and unstable souls, they who had for a time walked with Him, now returned to their occupations and gave up such hopes as they had before formed. Our Lord has condemned as unworthy of His work and reward all those who thus begin and fall away, who "put their hand to the plough and look back." Luke ix. 62.

twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the [a]words of eternal life.

69 And we believe, and are

[a] Acts 5. 20.

Such persons may be saved, for God is merciful, but they are not vessels made unto honor and fitted for the Master's use here.

67. *Will ye also go away?* This was said, 1. To try them. Others were deserting Him, and they too might feel the force of example and repent of their undertaking. They saw now that He was not willing to head any revolt. It was requisite that they should in a manner renew their vow and promise formerly made, by their leaving all to follow Him. 2. To warn them that though they needed a Saviour, He was not dependent on them for service. They were free to leave the cause, which was thus neglected by their neighbors. 3. To warn them thus early in their work, that the truth and value of religion lie not in numbers but in itself, and to encourage them in other scenes of worse trial, by the memory of His faith in God during this. 4. To stimulate them to fidelity, since there was one traitor in their little circle. This warning they strangely neglected to the last, but it is now recorded by one of them, as a proof of the foreknowledge of Jesus.

68. *Simon Peter answered Him.* Peter was older than the other disciples. Jesus when at Capernaum lodged at his house. And it is certain that he enjoyed a position of respect in that little company, which made it natural that he should be the first to speak, on so delicate an occasion. He was a man eager, impetuous and energetic, and save for one sad fall, deserving of our sincere reverence. ¶ *To whom shall we go?* We have staked our all here, we abide by this choice, we can have no other. Recall that this Peter knew not yet those doctrines of grace, which are familiar to us, the Divinity of Christ, His death and resurrection; and we see the fervor of a hero in his reply. Those words which turned back the crowd from making Jesus a king, were words to put off into the future his fond ambition, but he believes in his Master still, and will have no hesitation among His followers. ¶ *Thou hast, &c.* "Thou art the Messiah, a Prophet of God, and though we cannot fathom all Thy words, yet Thou hast the true doctrine of eternal life, we believe. With Thee we are right and safe; without Thee, no storm on Galilee ever tossed our frail barks as our souls would be tossed in the tempests of despair." He that holds to the truth in good report is a wise man; he that feels his hold grow stronger in evil report is a hero, or better, a true disciple.

69. *We are sure.* Peter has somewhat, whereby to encourage his Master in this crisis. He could look beyond the loaves and fishes, and catch the spiritual harmonies of His teaching. And putting together the rapid events and words of the last twenty-four hours, he arrives at a higher grade of faith, than he had before held, that Jesus is not only Messiah, but is sent by God—a Divine Legate. See Matt. xvi. 16. ¶ *Christ, the Son of the living God.* This confession of faith was not yet perfect, for it saw not yet, Christ the crucified, the Offering for sin, of which St. Paul has spoken so plainly, *after* the event. 1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 1. It signified that Peter's faith was such that he would follow Christ even to death; for that the glorious power which He displayed was above all human reach. It was the precise faith which was needed to carry the disciples on at that time. It taught them to believe the words of Christ as from God, and to wait with docility for more light.

70. *You twelve.* Chosen them to closer friendship, to be near Him and to share all His life. Jesus reminds them of this choice, as a reason for their implicit trust in His love. ¶ *One of you.* Judas. Peter had spoken for all the disciples. Jesus excepts the one, whose false heart

sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 [a]Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 [b]His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

5 (For neither did his brethren believe in him.)

a Lev. 23, 34. *b* Mat. 12, 46. *c.* Luke 8, 21.

probably in this very event had begun to find out its mistake, and to long to get back to the world again. ¶ *A devil.* A false, treacherous and dangerous person. It does not mean absolutely what our English word *devil* signifies, for that would make him out a fiend, but the orginal word of Greek, signifies a *slanderer*, and is used in that sense 1 Tim. iii. 11. This word was then given by bad pre-eminence to the evil spirit, for this is his peculiar work. Rev. xii. 10; Job i. 9–11.

71. *Spake of Judas.* This the writer adds for the information of the reader of his gospel, who might be a stranger to these events. He, of course, knew this when he wrote it, but not when Jesus spake it. For it is clear beyond dispute that the disciples did not know who would betray Jesus, till the last moment. For, 1. They did not believe that He would die. True He told them so in every way, but they had some mode of explaining His words away. They could not receive them in their plain sense. 2. When Jesus at the last, sent out Judas to perfect his evil design, it is said that the rest of the disciples supposed that he was sent as their almoner on some errand of charity. So that it is not beyond our belief, that Judas was a wily and smooth hypocrite; possibly the most plausibly-pious man of the number, as Bp. Andrews ironically calls him, "the *Pater pauperum*—father of the poor."

CHAPTER VII.

1. *After these things.* After the events narrated in the last chapter, which occurred just before the Passover, in the spring of the year. ¶ *Jesus walked.* Went round the country teaching and fulfilling the work of His mission. ¶ *In Jewry.* Judea. The word is apparently taken from the older translation of the Testament by Tyndal. ¶ *The Jews sought.* They of Jerusalem probably hearing of the crowds which had attended Him before the Passover, and of their wish to make Him king.

2. *Feast of Tabernacles.* One of the three great feasts of the Mosaic ritual, in which all the males of the Jewish nation were ordered to appear before the Lord in the Temple. Deut. xv. 16. It received its name from the fact that the people left their houses and dwelt for the time in tents, in order to commemorate, in a lively manner, their wanderings in the desert, under the Divine protection. Lev. xxiii. 42. It was celebrated in the autumn, as a feast of *thanksgiving*, after the general harvest of wine and oil, in the Jewish month Tisri, answering to the latter half of our September and the first half of October. It was continued eight days, and the time spent in costly sacrifices and general rejoicing. On the last day was a holy convocation. This was the *great day* of this feast. The ceremonies of this festival are accurately described in the Old Testament. See

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

Levit. xxiii. 39–43; Numb. xxix. 13–39; Deut. xvi. 13–17; Neh. viii. 16–18. It was now September of the last year of our Lord's ministry, which was finished at the next Passover in the following March.

3. *His brethren.* See Matt. xii. 47. His relatives. ¶ *Thy disciples.* Those who were inclined to adopt Him as a leader. These persons speaking were anxious to stimulate the ambition of Jesus, which seemed to them strangely inactive. If He had made disciples in Judea (John iv. 1–3), why did he not make use of them? Why not deliver His nation? They knew nothing of His real spiritual work. They speak after the manner of men.

4, 5. *For there is no man, &c.* They cite a general rule, to which His conduct was an exception. This they could not account for. "No man who claims to be sent from God and wishes to be known openly as a leader of others, does miracles in secret, i. e. in an out of the way village or so of a province like Galilee. He would go to Judea, be seen of all men, convince the crowd, and gain the approval of the Sanhedrim." And this rule of theirs would have been a good one, if Jesus had sought to save the bodies rather than the souls of men. ¶ *If thou do, &c.* "If thou doest the works of the Messiah, do them openly." They evidently believed that there were miracles done by Jesus, but they are strangers to any spiritual and future design in them. Their language is the worldly wisdom of men who saw, as they supposed, wonderful works thrown away, strange power wasted in caring for beggars and lepers here and there in obscure villages, but not used to gain men of wealth and station, and to build up a centre of influence. ¶ *Neither did His brethren, &c.* This is plain, but it is limited. They believed, for they could not do otherwise, that He did miracles, but they did not believe in His claim to be Messiah, from the use which He made of His power.

6. *My time.* This reply is so exactly suited to the two suggestions of His friends, that we give both senses in which it may be taken: 1. "You urge me to go now publicly with you. My time is not yet convenient for going up to this feast. I will go up alone; at least not with you, whom I should only put in peril by so doing." 2. "You urge ambitious motives. My time of gaining and uniting a band of disciples, and showing Myself their Head, is not yet come. Other things, not known to you, must come first," namely His death, and resurrection. See chs. viii. 20; xiii. 1.

7. *The world cannot hate you.* They were worldly wise, as their reasoning showed. They were in no danger in going to Jerusalem without Him, for they had no enemies there. They had no testimony to bear against the sins of men, and the rulers and mobs of their city would rather praise their unbelief than give them trouble. ¶ *Me it hateth.* This replies to their prompting, verse 4. 1. "The world hates Me, and that not because it lacks the knowledge of My works, but because I testify against its sinful works. So that I know that while I do this, it is in vain to hope for its love by showing miracles." It would have been a poor conversion, as we can now see, for our blessed Saviour to have gained numbers by wonderful works, and not made them first cease to be "workers of iniquity." Matt. vii. 22, 23. 2. Jesus seems also to say, "I will not go with you, for such is the present hatred of the Jews to Me, that it would be a public exposure of myself to danger, and bring you also into trouble."

8. *I go not up yet.* Supply the words

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

10 ¶ But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit, no man spake openly of him, for [a]fear of the Jews.

14 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

15 And the Jews [b]marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man ‖letters, having never learned?

a Ch. 9, 22; & 12, 42. *b* Mat. 13, 54. ‖ Or, *learning.*

with you. For the tenth verse manifests that this was His meaning. The inhabitants of a village were in the habit of going together in one caravan or party. He would go privately. He was so far from desiring to gain mere numbers of disciples in Judea, that He would dispense with the usual company of His Galilean kinsmen. Or it may have a further meaning: That He would not go up to that feast to make the grand demonstration of His power, but would find His *time* in the Passover which was coming. Jesus did once enter Jerusalem as a king, with such a concourse as that which was doubtless here proposed by these kinsmen. Matt. xxi. 8.

12. *Murmuring.* Private disputation. Such murmuring as arises from many persons differing. ¶ *Deceiveth the people.* For instance, saying that He was Lord also of the Sabbath, and making Himself Son of God, doing wonderful works, and denouncing the hypocrisies of their rulers. Such things were the works of Jesus, by which they were enraged. The wicked Pharisees, who had long deceived the nation, now, in their blindness, call the truth of God a deception.

13. *Spake openly of Him.* None spoke out openly or boldly, either for or against. Not the people, for they were in doubt and perplexity. They act like men on the eve of a revolution, when common men grow timid and disturbed. Some were for Him, but could not understand the plans by which Jesus directed His life. If He had unfurled the banner of the Lion of Judah, and called them to a holy war, all would have been plain; but His reserve, His patience and self-denial, they could not account for. Others were hostile, but fearful; and the rulers feared the people, the people the rulers. All were excited and doubtful. An impostor, an earthly king, could ask no better preparation for his plans. Jesus shows His Divine nature and inspiration that He made no effort to "grasp the time" thus offered to Him. Lord, teach us to be thus dead to all that may turn our hearts away from the last great crown of righteousness!

14. *About the midst.* The fourth day. The feast lasted a week. ¶ *The temple.* Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *And taught.* He appeared in the temple suddenly as a Teacher of truth, quiet, unmoved by the popular excitement. And how strange this occupation at such a time. Not doing miracles to awe them, but simply teaching the Jews, as was customary, in their own Scriptures. This, while half Jerusalem sought to destroy Him.

15. *Letters.* Things or books written. So St. Paul speaks of *the holy letters*, correctly translated the holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The only letters or books valued by the nation above all others, were the rolls of the sacred writings. ¶ *Having never learned* Having never been a disciple in any of the schools of the rabbis. The Jewish

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he [a]shall know of the doctrine,

[a] Ch. 8, 43.

schools were the only places in which the Scriptures were taught. The scholars in them were indoctrinated more into the traditions of the elders than the pure word of God. Thus every scholar received the peculiarities of his teacher, and ascribed great importance to his assertions. Jesus taught differently, "as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Matt. vii. 29. The Jews could not account for the difference nor the authority.

16 *My doctrine.* Not a single dogma, but the chief subject of His teaching, which was the covenant of the Gospel. This was from God. The part of the Mediator was to make it known as a Divine revelation, not as a mere human deduction or offspring of the knowledge common to all. ¶ *Is not mine.* It was not His, as a man; not His, as the peculiar systems of the rabbins, for instance, Shammai or Hillel, were theirs, but it was the revelation given to Him by God who sent Him. Rev. i. 1.

17. *If any man will do His will.* Compare this with the objection, which is implied in the preceding question. Whence knoweth this man letters, &c. This reply places the source of spiritual knowledge not in the intellect, but in the obedience of the whole soul. It was not gained from the schools, but in the subjection of the will and life to God. For we all recognize the fact, that true piety consists not in how much a man knows, but in the manner that his knowledge is appropriated in his actions. They who quench their thirst know more of the value of water to refresh them than the most skilful chemist can tell them. The Jews were sadly given to vain philosophies, and neglected to use the wisdom they analyzed. ¶ *Shall know the doctrine.* A sincere follower shall come to a full knowledge of the Christian system. A sinner who prays, repents, and obeys the Gospel, knows whether or not the Gospel blesses him in so doing. A hungry soul catches a divine proof of its preciousness when it causes it to hunger and thirst no more; when it regulates the passions, and produces self-denial. And this experimental knowledge in its place is the best divinity. The error of fanaticism upon this subject is, that it falsely supposes that this kind of knowledge is the only kind required to make the believer an "infallible doctor." It does not make the sinner a teacher of antiquities, nor a professor of ecclesiastical order, but it does make him a Christian, and it is his own fault if it does not make him a *modest* one. ¶ *Whether it be of God.* God has placed in all men a reason and conscience, which, even in their fallen state, have power to recognize the divine truth and use of His revelations. Any one, unless in unhappy exceptions, who simply and honestly practises piety, will perceive that piety is the very truth which is needed to make him what God intended him to be. And next he finds in a living faith in Christ the truth, which is as light to the eyes, living water to the thirst, and the bread of life to the hunger of the soul, the infallible proof of its original with the God who has made us.

18. *He that speaketh of himself.* Or, *from himself*, that is, by his own wisdom and authority. This is to be taken here, as said only of such human teachers, as speak from their own authority or from vanity, while they neglect to learn and teach the will of God; for in this sense it is true. But we are not to force it beyond its proper meaning.

whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

19 [c]Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

20 The people answered and said, [b]Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

a Ex. 24, 3; De. 33. 4; Ac. 7. 38. *b* Ch. 8. 48, 52; & 10, 20.

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 [c]Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses,[d] but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man.

c Lev. 12, 3. *d* Gen. 17, 10.

Many speak properly by their own judgment, when they have no power to go beyond it. Such as our Lord meant, are they who, from vanity and desire of popularity, taught religion to the Jews. This sort of men were worldly-wise, and being satisfied with things as they were, would say nothing to make men hate them. And so certain is the rule, that Jesus showed His love of God's truth, in saying and doing things which opposed the evil ways of men, and roused their hatred. ¶ *Seeketh his own glory.* Takes care to make himself acceptable to all. ¶ *No unrighteousness.* This is one of those profound truths which Scripture reveals in its peculiar use of words. It couples indissolubly truth and righteousness, falsehood and unrighteousness. The false knowledge, false teaching, false testimony, and *false living*, are hardly ever separated in real life. The tree is known by its fruits. All true teachers are men of true lives, of sincere godliness.

19. *Did not Moses give you the law, &c.* The connection of ideas seems to be this: "You Jews who put on the pretence of judging Me fairly, do not. Moses himself taught this doctrine of mine in shadows. You follow after teachers, who seek their own glory, and pretend to love the law of Moses, but you do not any of you *keep the law.* Hence you are wrong in the first thing, and from your evil lives and hearts you are evil minded, and seek to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth." ¶ *To kill me.* See v. 32. This seems to be thrown in as a startling warning to some of them, that He knew their secret plans.

20. *The people.* Of course only *some* of the people. Those who were not privy to any such conspiracy. ¶ *Hast a devil.* A Jewish mode of saying, "You are crazy, some evil spirit has upset your mind, that you speak so preposterously." Ch. x. 20.

21. *One work.* Some cure wrought on the Sabbath, which offended them. ¶ *Marvel.* Are amazed. They could not account how He could be the Messiah and do such things. They could not conceive how God would delight in good done, if the doing of it cut across a rubric or canon.

22. *Gave unto you circumcision.* Lev. xii. 3. This rite was a service of labor sufficient to be noticed by men who objected to the labor of rubbing ears of barley in the hand as one walked. Matt. xii. 2. But it was an important rite since the uncircumcised were cut off from Israel; and it was to be done on the eighth day. What then if the day should come on Saturday? Moses had said nothing of this, but simply ordered the eighth day, and that on pain of excision! They judged rightly that the rite must be done on the Sabbath, but failed to reason rightly from their own act. ¶ *Not because, &c.* It was not a part of the Mosaic institution, but of the covenant which had been previously made with Abraham. This distinction, St. Paul dwelt on in his Epistle to the Galatians, namely, the "blessing of Abraham," a blessing given to faith, not to the law. Gal. iii. 11–14; v. 6, 14. The rite began as a seal of the covenant with Abraham. Gen. xvii. 9, 10. ¶ *On the Sabbath day.* It was their custom, and was approved by all. Compare the argument on this same subject used by Jesus. Matt. xii. 5.

23 If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision,‖ that the law of Moses should not be broken: are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day?

24 [a]Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

‖ Or, *without breaking the law of Moses.*
[a] De. 1. 16, 17; Pro. 24. 23; Jas. 2, 1.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?

26 But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27 Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

¶ *A man.* A male, i. e. a male child.

23. *Are ye angry, &c.* How plain was their folly. How convincing the truth of the doctrine which speaks not of itself, but resorts to the authority of God. They broke the ritual law if necessary, in order to perform the very act which bound one to obey it. Therefore the inference was irresistible that the ritual law in its nature was made *for man* (to suppress evil, and cultivate habits of piety, but not to suppress goodness and mercy) and not man for it. ¶ *Every whit whole.* Entirely cured, or healed; body and soul. If we suppose that the old charge made a year and a half before was here renewed (see John v. 16), then we now learn that the paralytic then spoken of was cured in body (which had been wholly diseased), was *restored to the worship of the temple* (a great matter with the Jews), and was made a humble and docile disciple of Christ from having been formerly a great sinner. Ch. v. 14.

24. *Righteous judgment.* Aim at just, sound, worthy opinions. The bigot dwells in the circle of a letter or custom. The Christian should earnestly pray for wisdom, to breathe in the liberty which Christ gives, without running into license. Righteous judgment is here, a judgment formed on the character of God, the real end of the Sabbath and the law, the mercy shown in the deed of healing the palsied man, the power that did it, and other considerations of the kind.

25. *Of Jerusalem.* Persons living in the holy city. They of course knew what was the popular voice there, and what were the designs of the Sanhedrim and wealthy men.

26. *The very Christ.* Are they conscience-stricken and convinced, or why do they suffer Him to go about boldly? Or it may have been said contemptuously, and recorded as one of the many opinions of the day, by the writer. It was doubtless asked in such a way, as to reach the ears of the rulers. Ver. 32. Again it may have been a fear in the citizens, lest the Galileans should make some disturbance.

27. *Howbeit.* But, i. e., He we know cannot be the Christ, for, &c. ¶ *Whence He is.* His parents and residence. They would have said, Joseph, Mary, and Nazareth. They knew nothing of His real birth. ¶ *No man knoweth whence He is. Whence He is* signifies in the Hebrew idiom simply of *what parentage*, though in any sense this opinion was a mistake of unlearned persons. The Pharisees knew better, as we see, v. 42, and Matt. ii. 5. Or it was an opinion founded on some mistaken interpretation of their prophets; for instance, Is. liii. 8, "Who shall declare His generation?" Opinions of their rabbis have come down to us, which seem to favor this notion. They said that Christ would come in Bethlehem, but would then disappear again till Elias came to anoint Him. How many and wild were their notions, we may conjecture, when we recall the fact that they confused the first and second coming of the Messiah, and expected Him to recall the faithful Jews to this world again, to enjoy a long millennium of earthly bliss.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29 But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

32 ¶ The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

34 Ye shall [a]seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

a Hos. 5, 6; Ch. 13, 33.

28. *Cried.* Spoke loudly to be heard by all, as one who was rebuking their hypocrisy. ¶ *Whence I am.* "Ye know, or ought to know, that I am from heaven, by my works." They were convinced of this, and were striving against their convictions, by such feeble reasons as that mentioned above.

30. *They sought to take Him.* They sought for a favorable opportunity. There was danger in doing it rashly, for the people might have risen in rebellion against them. They must be prudent in their crime, subtle in their malice. ¶ *His hour.* The day of His death, called by our Saviour "your hour and the power of darkness." Lu. xxii. 53. While wicked men wait for their hour, they think not that they are restrained by the Almighty and compelled to fulfil His plans.

31. *Will He do more miracles?* Can He prove His coming from God, in any more wonderful manner? For Jesus had far surpassed the former prophets in every respect. Single prophets had wrought single miracles, or one here and there. But He worked, by a word, all manner of wonders. This was the question of those who believed in Jesus, and meant to be answered in the negative.

32. *Pharisees and chief priests.* Nothing is said here of the Sadducees, for they, as a sect, cared little for this dispute. It was the Pharisee who was anxious for the questions of religion, lest any innovation should be made against the common rules. ¶ *Officers.* Those who executed the judgments of the Sanhedrim. They were a sort of civil police to preserve order in the city, at the command of the Jewish rulers. Others suppose a band of Levites to have been employed as a temple guard, during the great feasts.

33. *Little while.* This was October. The following March witnessed His crucifixion. It was truly only a little while before His death. Jesus in this manner assures the officers that their attempts to seize Him at that feast of Tabernacles were unavailing, and by this gentleness and firmness won on them so far that they had not the heart to execute their commission. For surely such quiet, such mildness, and absence of all fear in Jesus, was a wonder to them. They knew not how to set about taking Him, who, without resisting them, awed them by the assertion of His foreknowledge.

34. *Ye shall seek Me.* This alludes to His resurrection, as the last verse does to His death. "Ye Jews will yet seek for Me, but then I shall be no longer found among men." It may refer to their own coming troubles, when they would look eagerly for the Messiah to help them; but is perhaps better taken in a more general sense. "Ye who now desire to destroy me, shall

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto [a]the dispersed among the [‖]Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

36 What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

37 In the last day[b] that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, [c]If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

a Is. 11. 12; Jas. 1. 1; 1 Pet. 1. 1. ‖ Or, *Greeks.*

b Lev. 23, 36. *c* Is. 55. 1.

seek for me, but in vain. You will remember these days, and mourn the hardness of heart which you now manifest. Then if ye will seek Me truly, you must seek Me in heaven by faith and prayer, for I will be no more found in the body." ¶ *Where I am.* That is, in heaven, whither Jesus ascended. Acts i. 9, 11. The present tense is to be taken in a future sense,—*Where I will be*, yet not so as to lose its own sense. For such hints are scattered throughout the Scriptures to recall the faith in the Divinity of Christ. He was then in heaven, had ever been there, but would be as He then was not, i. e., in His human body. Ch. iii. 13. ¶ *Ye cannot come.* 1. Not in this life, as He says to His disciples, ch. xiii. 33, and to Peter, ch. xiii. 46. They, His friends, should follow Him afterwards, i. e., after this life. 2. They would not follow Him to heaven at all, because they should die in their sins. Ch. viii. 21.

35. *Dispersed among the Gentiles.* To the Jews dispersed in the various regions of Asia Minor and Europe, where the Greek language was spoken. The word translated *Gentiles*, is Greek, and may signify either, 1. The Hellenists, or Jews speaking Greek, and living among those of that tongue; or, 2, as the translators have given it, the Greeks who were put by a common figure of speech for all the Gentiles. These foreign Jews were held in some contempt by the natives of Palestine, as defiled by living among the unclean, idolatrous heathen. This conjecture made by the hearers of Jesus was trifling, for it was either in mockery, as the answer made in ch. viii. 21, 22 or it was to conceal their conviction that Jesus signified a far different departure, and a threat to them of final destruction.

37. *In the last day.* The eighth day of the feast of Tabernacles. ¶ *That great day.* As the Jews used a public liturgy or form of prayer, which is still known among them in its main parts, we learn the peculiar fitness of our Lord's invitation to them at this time from their own ceremonies. Moses had commanded this last day to be kept as "a holy convocation." Lev. xxiii. 36. And the Jews had added certain expressive rites. 1. On the other days they had offered sacrifices for all nations; on this for the Jews alone. 2. They finished the reading of the Law, which had been begun on the first day. They also read three sections of the prophetic books, namely, 1 Kings ix. 1, containing God's covenant with Solomon; the first chapters of Joshua and the last of Malachi; Jesus fitly calls them to listen to Himself, the true Joshua, to save them, the Prince of Peace to rule, and the fulfilment of all the prophecies, to teach them. 3. The Jews brought, on this day in a golden pitcher, water from the fountain of Siloam (see note, ch. v. 2), through the water-gate into the temple with great solemnity and rejoicing. The priest mingled it with wine and poured it upon the sacrifice as it lay on the altar. It was probably done as an emblem of future blessings, in memorial of the water procured from the rock in the wilderness by Moses (see 1 Cor. x. 4), and perhaps with an allusion to Is. xii. 3, "with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation." According to the Jews

38 He that [a]believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, [b]out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit,[c] which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*, because that Jesus was not yet [d]glorified,)

a De. 18. 15. *b* Prov. 18. 4; Is. 12. 3; & 44. 3.

c Joel 2. 28; Ch. 16. 7; Ac. 2. 17, 33. 38. *d* Ch. 12. 14; & 16. 7.

themselves this water was a symbol of the Holy Spirit. So that while their thoughts were directed to this voluntary rite, and filled with joy for the temporal blessings which God had given them, Jesus guides their minds to the true water of life, which was to be found in the gift of the Holy Ghost, in the spiritual covenant of the Gospel. ¶ *If any man thirst.* See ch. iv. 14. This was spoken in the temple, with a loud voice, in the midst of the great congregation. They who thirsted spiritually, could find the true water of refreshment, namely, forgiveness of sin, and rest with a reconciled God, which would satisfy the cravings of their souls. ¶ *Let him come unto Me, &c.* "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 4. He calls them from the search of the righteousness and eternal life which they would have to be in the Mosaic law, to the true righteousness and life of faith. Zechariah had described the Messiah as "the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." Zech. xiii. 1.

38. *He that believeth on Me.* The very terms of the New Covenant. He that comes to Christ, with a spiritual faith in Him as the One who can forgive sin and heal his infirmities, and takes upon Himself this New Covenant, is accepted and blessed. ¶ *As the Scripture hath said.* Not in direct words but by implication: as the prophets and types of the Old Testament have all said in sum, or as the great end of their meaning. There is no single text in the Old Testament which says this, but the whole book as a whole teaches these two things. 1. That *faith* is the term of the New Covenant. "The just shall live by faith." Heb. ii. 4. This it repeats in every form. 2. That this Covenant would be established in Christ, that *greater Prophet*, of whom they had just read. Deut. xviii. 15–18. 3. The Scripture represents this faith in Christ as a *living water*, a fountain of spiritual energy. Is. xli. 18; xliv. 3; lv. 1–3. See Joel ii. 28. ¶ *Out of his belly.* The belly is put for the heart, Job xv. 35. Both in Scripture refer to the inward and spiritual power of religion, to give peace and joy in believing. In a hot and arid country a fountain is an image of exquisite delight. As a fountain flows from some hidden, exhaustless reservoir, and gives refreshment and causes an oasis to spring up in the desert; so the power of faith in Christ never fails to give pleasure and produce satisfaction in holy works. ¶ *Rivers.* See Prov. v. 16. It expresses the abundance of the blessing and its far-reaching effects. Says St. Chrysostom: "He says *rivers*, not river, to show the copious and overflowing power of grace, and *living water*, i.e., always moving, for when the Spirit has entered into and settled in the mind, it flows freer than any fountain, and neither fails, nor empties, nor stagnates. The wisdom of Stephen, the tongue of Peter, the strength of Paul are evidences of this. Nothing hindered them; but like impetuous torrents they went on, carrying every thing along with them."

39. *Of the Spirit.* Of the Holy Ghost, called also the Comforter, ch. xvi. 7. ¶ *Not yet given.* Not given in the *work of spiritual regeneration under the New Covenant.* This plain teaching is now strangely overlooked. Prophets foretold a new dispensation, when a new law of spiritual gifts would begin, and apostles confirm their visions. Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 16, &c.; Jer. xxxiii. 13; Heb. viii. 10 and x. 16. Jesus promises a Comforter to be given and to dwell with His disciples, whose coming was conditioned

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is [a]the Prophet.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the [b]scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem,[c] where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, [d]Never man spake like this man.

a De. 18. 15, 18. *b* Ps. 132. 11; Jer. 2. 3–5; Mic. 5. 2. *c* 1 Sam. 11. 1–4.

d Matt. 7. 29.

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on His *departure.* "It is *expedient* for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter *will not come unto you;* but if I depart I will send Him unto you." John xvi. 7, &c. And He repeated the same in effect in His last words with them, "ye *shall be baptized* with the Holy Ghost *not many days hence.*" "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts i. 4–8. And this Sealer of the New Dispensation came in power, not for miracles, but for repentance and the gifts of grace. The Apostle here interprets one promise (and of course all like it by the same rule) of the Holy Ghost, which *they who believe,* i. e., all Christians, should receive, but which was (in that manner) not yet given. And again, we find the disciples up to Pentecost Jews to all intents, men amazed, and groping for a "kingdom to Israel." See Acts i. The Spirit falls on them and they grope no more. So that we conclude, 1. That before that Pentecost, which was the true Epoch of the Christian Church, men did truly receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in a measure suited to their times. It fell *on them* and worked a holy strength in their souls, such as God was pleased to accept and bless. 2. That on and after that epoch, the Spirit was given in *regeneration;* the restoration of mankind to all the privileges and powers, which they had lost in Adam. This subject demands a careful comparison of the Scriptural passages which treat of it. It is the Pentecost which we celebrate on Whit-Sunday, when, 1, the Holy Ghost came down from heaven upon the Apostles "to teach them and to lead them to all truth; giving them both the gifts of divers languages and also boldness with fervent zeal to preach the Gospel unto all nations, whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and knowledge of God." 2. The gift of the spiritual regeneration was granted *in consequence of the death of Christ,* as the Fathers constantly taught from this very passage. The miracles soon ceased, the new law of grace runs on still. ¶ *Not yet glorified.* Not ascended to heaven. John xvi. 7; Acts i. 5, &c.

40. *Of a truth.* It is certainly true. They felt the propriety of this language as based on the scenes around them in the temple.

41, 42. See note, Matt. ii. 4–6. ¶ *Where David was.* 1 Sam. xvi. 1–4.

46. *Like this man.* The words of Jesus were so exactly fitted to all that was transpiring, as to thrill the heart of every Jew. Those harmonies we cannot now recall. But we can, 1, rejoice at the proof which was extorted, of the general conviction of that generation of Jews, that no man ever so fulfilled *the spirit of their law* as Jesus did. 2. We can, if Christians, recall times and seasons, when this celestial harmony of Scriptural truth has filled our souls with

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 [a]Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came [‖] to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

51 [b]Doth our law judge *any* man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

[a] Ch. 12. 42; Ac. 6. 7; 1 Cor. 1. 20, 26, & 2. 8.

[‖] Gr. *to Him.* [b] De. 1. 17; & 17. 8, &c.; & 19. 15.

the same admiration and gratitude to God.

47. *Deceived.* The language of malice. After His death, the rulers called Jesus "that deceiver," and charged Him with deceiving the people. They were compelled either to believe on Him or to arrest Him. Hate and worldly passions prevented them from doing the one; fear of the people and the invisible hand of God held them awhile from the other. It is sad to think that intellect and power and privilege can lift men up often to so great perversity of heart. No sinner knows how soon Satan may enter his heart and make it obdurate to all the light of truth.

48. *Have any of the rulers, &c.* This sneer was worthy of its source. It is a weapon of evil, which has not lost any of its force. How could these officers, poor unlearned Levites perhaps, venture to differ from such as claimed all power and wisdom, those who understood the law and taught the people? But it was a false argument. For the officers had declared a fact; and pious rulers should have shown them gently the unreasonableness of their admiration of Jesus, if they could. But they could not, and they taunted them. So is it still. Many are beaten back from a trial to be Christians by this same manner of taunt. "What will the world say?" It is only when one despises such sneers, whether suggested in the mind or by wicked companions, that he can begin to repent and believe.

49. *This people.* This *crowd* or *rabble*, with probably a tone and gesture of contempt. God had set them to be guides and comforters to this people. There is nothing more banned in the Bible than *pride*. Prov. viii. 13. But how hateful is the vice in those who are set over a people as their spiritual rulers. ¶ *Who knoweth not the law.* "Are not instructed in the knowledge of the schools, are ignorant of rabbinic subtleties" The rabbins and their lore have perished; but the knowledge which the crowd received grows clearer every day. The human systems that surround truth perish and vanish; the fountain runs on, and the ignorant and despised drink of it and are saved. ¶ *Are cursed.* See Deut. xxvii. 26. They declared the people cursed by Heaven in manifesting a disposition to leave *them* for the carpenter's son. So do bigots confound themselves with the truth of God, and imagine that blessings must descend only by their help. So has Rome declared the Protestant world anathema, for denying her pope. And Protestants may not exult, when they recall their own maledictions against each other. There is order in Christianity, for it is not an anarchy; but the order of its unity does not allow spiritual pride nor wrathful denunciations.

50. *Nicodemus.* See ch. iii. 1. ¶ *One of them.* One of the great council. ¶ *By night.* St. John mentions this to explain how it was that Nicodemus became a confessor of Jesus, i. e. from having conversed with Him in private.

51. *Doth our law, &c.* It is a natural law that is here suggested; but Nicodemus puts it upon this other footing. See Acts xxv. 16. He says not "*Is it just?*" but "Is it according to our customs?" There is no special passage of the law of Moses which contains these words, for there was need of none. That which nature teaches so positively to all men may be left to it. The spirit of this law is found in all the Levitical commands which require justice and equity; for instance, Lev. xix. 15, 16.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee ?[a] Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS went unto the mount of Olives:

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down and taught them.

a Is. 9. 1, 2; Matt. 4. 15; Ch. 1. 46.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the [b]law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou ?

6 This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the

a Lev. 20. 10; Dr. 17. 7.

52. *Thou also.* They scoff at him. "What, even you, a ruler and master in Israel, do you speak for Him ?" for it took away their proof, that none of the rulers had believed on Jesus. Why did they not answer him ? They could not; and, as angry men, they sneer instead. How weak is the heart which either uses or fears a sneer. ¶ *A Galilean.* A follower of the Galilean, for they pretended to believe that Jesus was born in Nazareth. Party-spirit is fruitful in inventing contemptuous names for its opponents, and the Christian will be a wise (alas, how rare) man who abjures such weapons, and judges not by prejudice concerning his brethren. ¶ *No prophet.* That is, none are foretold as being born there.

53. *And every man, &c.* This is an emphatic conclusion of the writer, for the time of this Feast of Tabernacles had been one of intense excitement and general expectation, both of the friends and enemies of Jesus. The people were in doubt. Some were hostile. Some looked for a glorious display of power, the unfurling a royal standard. Some were enraged and fearful of a Galilean outbreak. The Sanhedrim was eager but baffled. But the time passed. Nothing was done. The hour of a world's redemption had not yet struck. The people went back to their towns and villages, perplexed, disappointed, wondering. When they gather again to the city, it will be for a bloodier scene, the Passover of a world's salvation. ¶ *His own house.* They left the booths in which they had dwelt for some days. Lev. xxiii. 42. The feast ended. The villagers returned home, the citizens to their houses.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Mount of Olives.* Probably to Bethany, where He abode at times. Matt. xxi. 17; Luke xxi. 37. Or He may have spent this night in prayer, in some retired place on the mountain. Gethsemane lay at its foot, near the city. Bethany on the opposite slope, where Lazarus and his sisters dwelt.

5. *Moses in the law, &c.* The punishment by the law for this crime with a married woman was death; with an espoused virgin, death by stoning. Deut. xxii. 22–24; Lev. xx. 10. This woman was therefore espoused and liable to the latter punishment. Strangling was adopted by the Jews in some cases as a more merciful end. If the woman was a daughter of a priest, she was to be burned. Ezekiel mentions the addition of thrusting through with a sword, as used in his time. Ez. xvi. 38–40. The Gospel declares eternal death the fate of all such criminals who die without repentance. Gal. v. 19-21.

6. *Tempting Him.* Trying Him, so that they might lead Him into danger by any answer which He could give. The Pharisees were men of great craft,

ground, *as though he heard them not.*

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, [a]He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

a De. 17. 7.

9 And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the

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and skilful to frame temptations or tests of this kind, in which any answer would be capable of perversion. If Jesus decided for her instant death, He would show Himself as a judge rather than a saviour, and he might be presented to the Romans as interfering with their laws. If He decided for the opposite, He could be held up to universal contempt, as a lax teacher and one permitting this gross crime. But it seems that they supposed that He would let her go. They had observed Him inclined to mercy, doing good, and mingling with every class of the people. And their very style shows this opinion. ¶ *Wrote on the ground.* On the pavement of the temple. By this action say some, 1. Jesus showed that His thoughts were elsewhere. He declined being a judge. 2. Others, He wrote some sentence in the dust, which was pertinent to the case. And many ancient copies of this Gospel add to verse 8th, "He wrote on the ground *the sins of each one of them.*" 3. Again, He signified that such persons were "written in the earth," not in heaven, with allusion to Jer. xvii. 13. ¶ *As though He heard them not.* Some manuscripts have this sentence, but it is considered now to be an addition to the original text. It is probably spurious.

7. *They continued asking Him.* They were too eager to be warned by His manner, or were unwilling to understand His gesture. Pressing the question, they put themselves to shame by their eagerness, and learn what it is to tempt One, who could read the secrets of all hearts. ¶ *Is without sin.* He that is not guilty of these crimes of uncleanness or those equal to them. Josephus, the historian of the Jews, testifies to the lascivious character of his countrymen. Jesus answers their question. You who judge another, judge yourselves first. First correct the sins which you are conscious of and then condemn others. For as the law was a severe penal code written in stones, so the Gospel is a code of the Spirit, and allows pardon to the penitent, but denounces vengeance against the unforgiving. ¶ *Let him first cast a stone at her.* Cast *the* first stone, which was usually fatal. It was cast by the witnesses to the guilt, and was a signal for the rest to stone her. "For he who judges not himself first cannot know how to judge correctly in the case of another. For though he knew what the offence is, from being told, yet he cannot judge of another's deserts, who, supposing himself innocent, will not apply the rule of justice to himself."—*St. Gregory.*

9. *The eldest.* Those conscious of more sins, and having been led by their late expressions of zeal against the woman farther than the rest. They who had just been the boldest are properly made first ashamed. They saw the justice of the sentence and the beautiful simplicity and strength of innocence and truth, "saw and mourned their loss." ¶ *Alone.* This was in the court of the women in the temple. "There were left however two, the pitiable and the Pitiful: the woman, you may suppose, in great alarm, expecting punishment from one in whom no sin could be found."—*St. Augustine.* The accusers had left, but it is possible that the disciples were still with

woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, [a]I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

a Ch. 1. 4, 5, 9.

Him. ¶ *Standing in the midst.* Standing as the Pharisees had placed, her, in a conspicuous place, ashamed and weeping.

10. *Woman, &c.* He asks the question to call her attention, that the following sentence may be more lasting in her memory. None had dared to begin the punishment of the woman. The secret power of conscience had withheld them, confused their plans and sent them ashamed away.

11. *Neither do I condemn thee, &c.* The Greek text of this passage has been strangely confused in many manuscripts, by the officious zeal of copyists, who were afraid that there was too much license given to sin, by our all-wise Saviour. But they were foolish in their fear. For, 1. Jesus came not to *judge* the world, i. e., to condemn and punish sinners, but to save them. And He pardoned all sinners such as this one, only on conditions of repentance, and amendment of life. 2. Jesus refuses simply to condemn her, as the accusers had been bidden to do, by *stoning.* For as the guilty had not stoned her, so the Guiltless leaves her free. 3. Jesus was obedient in this to the laws of the country. It was impossible for a private person to proceed to execution upon an offender until the offender was tried by the proper authorities. 4. Jesus teaches the reader the Evangelical law in contrast to the Mosaic. Civil law may punish adultery with propriety, but the Saviour is the refuge of the penitent, even guilty of great crimes, ever saying to us all, "Go, and sin no more." Seal your penitence by a new life. As I have saved you from your accusers and given you life, go and use it in a better rule of conduct. Your punishment is delayed if you repent, but must inevitably fall on you by the hand of God if you continue in sin. Jesus condemned the sin, but spared the sinner who repented.

12. See note, ch. i. 49. His teaching is founded on the incident here related, on that *conviction of the conscience* (v. 9) which St. Paul declares to be the light of morals. Eph. v. 13.

13. *Of thyself.* This was a repetition of an objection which had already been refuted, ch. v. 31. But pride and malice are never ashamed to resort to the evil arts of falsehood. They remember cavils, but forget the refutations of them. ¶ *Is not true.* Not credible, or not to be taken as testimony, as no one can testify in his own case, to matters of fact. This is criminal law. But he who has power to do good is not to be forbidden declaring it, since his very actions prove that he has it.

14. *Though I bear record, &c.* Jesus refutes their objection. In ch. v. 31 He admitted it to be valid. Now we find that in the former place He speaks of His testimony as man taken singly and alone. And then He convinces them of there being many witnesses in His favor. Here He speaks of an authority which put Him above this human

15 Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17 It is also written in [a]your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself; and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me.

[a] De. 17. 6; 19. 16; He. 10. 28.

rule, which authority He had as the Son of God. As a messenger from God He had confirmed the truth of His mission before them. They were wrong in not believing the testimony of one who had given such proofs. ¶ *My record.* Witness, testimony. In this case it was the doctrine that He was the light of the world. This was true. ¶ *For I know, &c.* This is the *reason* why His doctrine was to be received. For He says that He knew His mission and the spiritual truths which He was sent to teach, and *they did not.* They cannot judge in the case, but must perforce receive His word. The Gospel stands on this foundation, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and sent by Him to the world. No one can know this unless he is told it. And while no prophet before Jesus was able to comprehend it, and it was a truth to be received by humble faith, so no one could teach it to others but Jesus Himself. Hence He declared it, not testifying of Himself, so much as delivering the message which He came to give. If we send a messenger with a sealed letter of credentials, we expect those who are addressed to accept him on the strength of that letter and to listen to his message. So the prophets spake as God bade them, and were believed on their own authority, since their message could be known only to themselves. Dan. ii. 47.

15. *After the flesh.* Not so much falsely, as with disregard to the spiritual meanings of their own laws and customs. They did not compare the works and teachings of Christ with the prophecies, and earnestly and prayerfully seek a solution of their difficulties. It is easy for men to read the Bible with a beam in the eye, which blinds them to all which is disagreeable to their prejudices and sectarianism. ¶ *I judge no man.* That is, as ye do, after the flesh. Or it may mean as an answer to some question of their minds, like this. "If we judge you wrongfully why do you not condemn us for it?" To this He replies, "This is not my time for judging the world, I have now come to offer mercy. Hereafter I will judge."

16. *And yet if I judge, &c.* Nevertheless, though Jesus the Light of men did not judge them then, His judgment would have been true, if He had given it, since He could not err. ¶ *Is true.* Is veracious, is beyond all question correct. ¶ *For I am not alone.* Whatever Jesus would have said was not to be received as coming from one speaking of His own authority. God spake by Him. He delivered a Divine message from the Father. ¶ *I and the Father.* They are both concerned in shedding that spiritual light. Now in the natural light of day there is one substance, light, but triple parts, brightness, heat and air, each necessary in all, so that we may get from it as fair a conception as natural objects can give us, of the truth here spoken. The Three Persons of the Trinity are present in each. And the Two, the Father, whom Jesus acknowledged, and the Son, whom they saw, concurred in this light, which forms the subject of this chapter, i. e., this true knowledge of salvation.

17. *In your law.* Not in these words, but in principle. Deut. xviii. 6; xix. 15. See Matt. xviii. 16. It is not only a natural principle, but is incorporated in the Mosaic law. ¶ *Is true.* Is final, beyond dispute.

18. *I am one.* It is a common principle that a man may testify to things which can be known in no other manner, though the case be his own. Now our Lord is testifying to His own *mission* from God. If He could not testify,

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: [a]ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

a 1 Jno. 4. 5.

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we would have a legate who could not call himself a legate; a messenger, not declaring that He came from God; which would be absurd. Jesus was not on trial as a criminal, for then He had been silent; but as a messenger of God, He declared the fact of His mission. ¶ *The Father, &c.* By miracles and signs, and especially by the voice heard at His baptism, declaring Him the "well beloved Son."

19. *Where is thy Father?* This was meant as a sneer "Who is he? Is he Joseph the carpenter, or some Galilean? Let us see how much credit to give him." They hoped to anger Him by this rudeness, for they must have known that Jesus meant that God was His Father. ¶ *Nor my Father.* They had refused to hear and consider the message of God by the Son, therefore they no longer could know Him, whom they boasted to know perfectly. For the true knowledge of God is *to know and do His will.* This will is revealed to us now in Christ.

20. *The treasury.* Which stood in the court of the women, where also Jesus had pardoned the adulterous woman. ¶ *His hour.* The time when He would lay down His life. This was at the following Passover, as He knew. Till then Jesus was guarded by a special providence, but not so that He should lay aside all care of Himself. This should teach us always to cast our care upon God, knowing that He careth for us.

21. *I go my way.* I depart, and leave you. ¶ *Ye shall seek me.* Either, 1. From hate, to exterminate my name from the earth in my followers; or, 2. Ye shall earnestly wish for the Messiah, when the days of terror and ruin come on this city. ¶ *Die in your sins.* Die unrepentant and unpardoned. This is spoken of them as a nation. Many did repent, and were forgiven. And all, even to the last who would repent, would find Christ merciful. But the nation only grew hardened to the last, and died desperately fighting against their punishment. How terrible the idea—die in sins! There is no pardon beyond the grave, for after death the judgment. To die in them is to carry them before God, and be cast out from His presence for ever.

22. *Will He kill Himself?* Will He do something as desperate as self-murder, in order to put this bar between us and Him? They who yield to passion, are incapable of learning the truth. These men spake this apparently from perplexity and hate.

23. *Ye are from beneath.* Opposed to from above, from this earth, i. e. Ye are carnal and judge according to the appearance, and are moved by worldly prejudices and ambition, so that you cannot discern in my works the proofs that I am sent to you from God. ¶ *I am from above.* From heaven. Jesus taught them the wisdom which testified that He had come from God, and which was able to lead them to Him. And the Jews, who saw His works, should have examined His doctrine by this standard. But when the affections are set on things here below, it is well

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me, is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, [a]then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

a Ro. 1. 4; Ac. 3. 17.

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nigh impossible to direct the mind to the things which are above. ¶ *This world.* These words, when emphasized in the New Testament generally signify the corrupt and sinful maxims, customs and evils of this wicked world, in opposition to the wisdom and holiness of the Christian body. 1 John v. 19.

24. *That I am.* The word *He* is added to complete the English. I am the Messiah, who can save you. The man who does not feel his spiritual wants, and go to this Saviour, dies in his sins, for he rejects the only means of pardon and purity.

25. *Who art Thou?* Thou, that makest this lofty claim, and art of so different original from us. Their pride is roused, and they are for pressing Jesus to the wall. For note how gently and quietly He teaches them. They had seen His works, Jesus now teaches them the *just inferences* from them. So with Nicodemus. He began with allowing Jesus to be a rabbi sent from God, because of His works. Jesus at once teaches him God's will and His own office. In something the same manner Jesus tells them the whole counsel of God, while they grow angry and refuse to receive these "heavenly things." ¶ *Even the same.* That is, "I have repeatedly told you this, that I am the One *sent from God*, who was prophesied of by your own prophets." Jesus was the *Shiloh* of whom Jacob spake, Gen. xlix. 10. This word is thought by many of the learned to signify *the One sent*, and that reference is made to that ancient prophecy in this and similar discourses. ¶ *From the beginning.* From the very first of my teaching you. Why ask Me this question now? I have no new character to teach than what I have declared already.

26. *I have many things to say, &c.* "Think not that I lack ability to confound and punish you." That Jesus did not judge them then, was the mercy of a Saviour, not from lack of power. But He referred them to a future judgment. ¶ *Is true.* "Yet God is to be believed, though you are now so difficult to please. Be assured of this, that I have told you only His will, which He has, to your certain knowledge, sealed by unmistakable proofs."

27. *They understood not.* Certainly they *could* have understood Him if pride and prejudice had not blinded their eyes, for He spake openly. We see in this instance how the words of Isaiah are to be taken (see Matt. xiii. 14. 15), of those who "seeing, see not," because they first *will not* to see. God has never closed the eyes of a sinner, until the sinner has first closed them himself in incurable obstinacy.

28. *When ye have lifted up.* We who now read this sentence, see the meaning of these words *lifted up* to have been to crucify. See John iii. 14; xviii. 32. Jesus spake of His crucifixion to His disciples privately soon after this. Luke xviii. 31, &c. He used this general phrase publicly, that, 1. The Jews might not pretend any ex-

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and [a]the truth shall make you free.

a Ro. 6. 14; 18. 22; & 8. 2.; Jas. 1. 25; & 2. 12.

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cuse from His prophecy for a cover to their own guilt. 2. That all should know that He accepted His death as a voluntary burden. ¶ *Then shall ye know.* They themselves afterwards allowed that a belief of His ressurrection would have a greater power with men. Matt. xxvii. 64. And the truth of these words of Jesus was established by His resurrection, and by the powers of the Holy Ghost given to His disciples after His ascension. ¶ *Of myself.* Nothing of myself, of my own will, or different from that which God the Father has determined.

29. *Is with me.* And confirms my word by miracles, and teaches me all His will. ¶ *Alone.* God had not deserted Him. Though men had done so yet Christ was not comfortless; for God was with Him. Compare chs. xiv. 18 and xvi. 32. ¶ *That please Him.* "I perfectly obey God in spirit and truth. Ye call Me sinner, for a miracle on the Sabbath, and seek to do Me wrong, but I am obedient to the Father in every respect." Behold the blessed state to which the Christian aims. His comfort is that God is with him, to guide and direct his course. He cannot be alone and comfortless, while the Spirit works in his soul. He aims constantly to have "a conscience void of offence," to do those things which are pleasing to God, even in times of difficulty and trial, after this blessed example.

30. *Many believed on Him.* From the convictions produced by this whole discourse. Ministers can seldom preach under circumstances as discouraging as these here related. Let them take courage in all cases, for they can hope even in the most prejudiced assembly to find some hearers who will receive the word of God into good ground and keep it.

31. *If ye continue.* The profession of their convictions must be followed by perseverance in obedience. ¶ *My disciples indeed.* This would not be the case with all of them. They would afterward, when temptation and persecution arise, fall away. Jesus then warns them as One who was more anxious for their salvation than their persons. And this test of the true believer is universal. However men differ as to the beginning of the Christian life, all must allow, that it must be continued by constant obedience to the end. "Faith if it have not works is dead, being alone." "Baptism representeth unto us our profession, which is *to follow Christ and be made like unto Him.*" On the one hand the Solifidian poisons the heart, by his claiming to follow by faith, to the contempt of a good life. On the other the papist often exalts the sacraments to a place of magical potency, as if they could make one holy, without his own prayers and labors. God works in us to will and to do, but never works without us. And God pardons the errors of the mind, but will not pardon the disobedience of the life. Let us seek him by faith, in the path which He has appointed, and we shall have enough to do, if we love one another and strive to enter in at the strait gate, without condemning the souls of others.

32. *Shall know the truth.* Of the Christian doctrine. This was to be a *future* gift gained by their continuing in His word. For the Christian dispensation was yet incomplete. They who followed Jesus knew not the whole truth as yet, but would see it in all its harmony by following on. See John xvi. 13. ¶ *Shall make you free.* Jesus spake of the spiritual freedom from sin, which His followers would receive. This freedom was then a future gift. It

33 ¶ They answered him, We be [a]Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever[b] committeth sin, is the servant of sin.

35 And the [c]servant abideth not in the house for ever, *but* the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son [d]therefore shall

a Lev. 25. 42.

b Ro. 6. 16, 20.; 2 Pe. 2. 19. c Gal. 4. 30. d Ro. 8. 2; Gal. 5. 1.

was received after this time, when the whole truth was revealed by the Holy Spirit. But they misunderstand Him in this word, as they had done in others, and look only to freedom here on earth from foreign tyrants. "From what shall the truth free us, but from death, corruption, mutability, itself being immortal, uncorrupt, immutable?"—*St. Augustine.*

33. *They answered Him.* Either some of those who had just before professed to believe Him, or some of the bystanders, probably the latter. For they were angry that He had threatened them with dying in their sins. And His promising freedom to the few, implied a sort of slavery for the many. ¶ *Abraham's seed.* The descendants of Abraham. There are two kinds of slavery. 1. By descent from a slave. 2. By being enslaved by war. They deny both sorts. For Abraham was free and so Sarah his wife. They had descended in a direct line from him, and inherited by blood all his privileges. And doubtless they urged his name, as a contrast to the humble name of Jesus—the patriarch against the "son of the carpenter." This they did to mortify His disciples, and hence they brought on themselves the rebukes which follow. ¶ *Never in bondage.* In the sense of civil freedom this was a downright falsehood, for though they were not slaves at the will of a domestic master, and had then certain rights, yet as a nation they were at this time under the Roman governor, and were ruled by foreign law. Also they had been held in bondage in Egypt and in Babylon. Deut. v. 15; Ps. cxxxvii. 3. From the fact of their former subjections, Bp. Warburton urges that they here claimed a spiritual freedom as given to them by their inheritance of Abraham's promises—a lofty condition before Jehovah, which put them above the need of any further freedom. "Our principles are of Divine extraction, and we never suffered ourselves to be enslaved to human decisions. The question was not about their freedom from Babylon—*but from Error.*"—*Bp. Warburton.*

34. *Servant of sin.* This manifests in what sense they were in want of freedom; and being an argument addressed to them, we may suppose that it refuted exactly their claim. For though they had received promises and privileges in Abraham, yet they had not retained the freedom which those privileges ensured, by holy, faithful obedience, but were sinners before God.

35. *The servant abideth not, &c.* A slave may be turned away (as was Hagar); he may be sold or banished; a son cannot be thus rejected. St. Paul has enlarged upon this declaration, so that the reader is referred to his words, Gal. iv. 21, to v. 1; and Heb. iii. 5, 6. Jesus contrasts the two covenants, one of which, given by Moses, was imperfect, transitory, and gendered to bondage (Rom. viii. 3); the other, brought by Christ, was final, perfect, and free. ¶ *Abideth not.* Has not an inalienable right. The dispensation of "Abraham's children," was not eternal, but must make room for his true children, the faithful of every nation. ¶ *The house.* Family. ¶ *For ever.* This word points us to the fact that Jesus speaks of a *covenant*, not a man, or He had said *for his lifetime.* The Jews were so familiar with such figurative language that His meaning was doubtless plain to His hearers.

36. *If the Son, &c.* This is the

make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

a Ro. 2. 28; & 9. 7; Gal. 3. 7, 29.

summation of the argument. As if He had said: "You claim freedom as Abraham's children, i. e., by the law. You allow no need of freedom from any other source. I tell you, that covenant was given for your sins, it was stern, it has convicted you of sin, it has condemned you, and you are convicted by it as the slaves to sin. Now by that law you have no real freedom, but must seek beyond it. If, therefore, you receive freedom in the new dispensation, which is to be perfect and *final*, then you will be in a state of salvation able to conquer sin, and heirs of the blessedness to come." This reasoning was not as clear, it may be, then as now, because now we see the whole of that latter covenant of Redemption; but this seems plainly the reasoning of our Saviour. ¶ *Free indeed.* Truly free from the dominion of sin.

37. *Abraham's seed.* "Ye are his natural descendants. That is true, but yet your own consciences will convict you of not being imitators of his virtues." God did not choose Abraham or his race for their merits, or from peculiar favor, but that His oracles might be kept by them unto the end. So that the error from which Jesus would now free the Jews, is, that God looked not at their blood, but at the state of their affections and their lives. ¶ *Kill me.* Ch. v. 16; vii. 32. ¶ *My word.* The testimony which I give, or the principles of love which I show. The Word is often put for the Gospel, and the reigning principle of it is charity to all. The Jews would not give place to the belief that Jesus was their Messiah, and to exclude it, they were led to meditate His destruction.

38. *Have seen.* "Do not think it means bodily vision, but innate knowledge sure and approved. For as the eyes when they see an object, see it wholly and correctly: so I speak with certainty what I know of my Father." —*Theophylact.*

39. *Abraham is our father.* This was indisputable, why repeat it, or why not repeat their boast of freedom? They are now hard pressed, who began by laying a snare for Jesus. Our Lord had granted that they were Jews and lineal descendants of the patriarch. They say it over, as those who, feeling the point of truth pushing them, seize hastily the first expression which occurs. And they betray the hardness of their hearts, that they will not yield to the truth, when it seems so irresistible. ¶ *Works of Abraham.* Any other descent was useless. This likeness alone could be available now. And they had wandered too far from the spirit of Abraham, to venture a claim to it. Abraham believed in God's call to him on less evidence than they had rejected. Abraham was merciful, loved to find the truth, and was prompt to obey it.

40. *A man that hath told you the truth.* It is for this only that you hate Me, as you yourselves know. ¶ *This did not Abraham.* The contrast was convincing: an instance of that "two edged sword" severity, that spiritual use of Scripture, from which there is no escape. The contrast of Abraham, the wanderer, the meek, just and righteous man, as they had learned of him in Scripture, and their

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we[a] have one Father, *even* God.

42 Jesus said unto them, [b]If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

44 [c]Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and [d]abode not in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

a Is. 63. 16; & 64. 8; Mal. 1. 6. *b* 1 Jno. 5. 1.

c Matt. 13. 38; 1 Jno. 3. 8. *d* Jude 6.

angry hearts and heated faces, could not leave them in a moment's doubt of the different relations which they held with God.

41. *Not born of, &c.* They again shift their ground, as they are driven from it. They can say no more of *privilege*, or peculiar covenant, but fall back on the broader claim. They pretend to understand Jesus as saying that they were of mixed race, and degenerate by idolatries from their ancestors, and now they too learn to call God their Father, the very claim which had enraged them when made by Jesus, v. 19. The word fornication in this verse is equivalent to *idolatry*, for which it is synonymous in the prophets. They would boast of their freedom from this sin, and their service of God. ¶ *One Father—God.* We worship Him alone, and are therefore accepted by Him. Alas! no formal degree of worship can avail for those who are not God's children in spirit and heart. Their temple was holy, but their hearts were evil. When our religion is in the lip and not the life, we have need to tremble.

42. *If God were your Father.* "If He were Father in that intimate sense which you profess. If you loved Him truly as a Father, then you would have a true sense of divine things, and would discern the truth which I speak without mistake." ¶ *Ye would love Me.* Suppose David, Isaiah, and other pious persons to have been present, they would have caught the inspired meaning and beauty of our Lord's teaching and loved it. For the soul that loves God, is enabled to perceive spiritual truth, while they who love this world are unwilling to receive it. For "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." James iv. 4. The Jews loved honor, wealth, ease, and their own proud notions. These obstructed their minds so that they would not see the truth which Jesus proclaimed, nor discern the necessity of a love of God above all things else. ¶ *Of myself.* Of my own will. As the false prophets did. Jer. xxiii. 21.

43. *Understand my speech?* "Why do ye not see that I am speaking to you the divine truths, which affect your spiritual condition? Why do ye wilfully draw only a worldly and contradictory meaning from them? There is to the reader of these discourses, a plain discrepancy between the parties, and a perverse misunderstanding on the part of the Jews of our Lord's words. That the words of Jesus could have been understood by them, if humbly received, is plain. It was pride and obstinacy which withheld them. ¶ *Hear my word.* Do not hear it truly and honestly, but only with the outward ears. For they took it for granted that Jesus could not be the Messiah, because He was humble and meek, and with this notion they could not receive the message which He brought. The only obstacle which is invulnerable in the way of life, is the perverse will of man. God puts none before him, nor allows any.

44. *Of your father the devil.* Ye

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

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imitate him, share his spirit, and make yourselves like him. See Ezek. xvi. 3; notes, Matt. iv. 4. ¶ *The lusts.* His evil desires, malicious intentions. These ye are carrying out. ¶ *Ye will do.* Not in a future sense, but better, "ye will to do." Ye choose to do or ye do them willingly. This was the manner of their being the children of the devil. It is evident in Scripture that great wickedness in large numbers of people, as also in individuals, is wrought by the suggestion and aid of the evil one. Thus an evil spirit fell upon King Saul, and Satan entered into Judas, and the apostles warn us against "the God of this world who hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." 2 Cor. iv. 4. And it is certain that this evil spirit is active and energetic to combine his forces against the glorious Gospel, in order to ruin the souls of men. But we are ever entirely responsible for the evil which we do, for he has no power over us, except that which we give him, by pride, unbelief and prayerlessness. Greater is the good spirit which is given to the Christian than the spirit of evil. And we are to receive the former by constant faithful prayer and obedient fear of God. ¶ *A murderer from the beginning.* From the beginning of the history of man, he has sought his ruin, which is the murder of the souls of his victims. Gen. iii. Sin came by his means (Rom. v. 12) and by it death. Also his first work after the fall of Adam was a fratricide. Gen. iv. 8; 1 John iii. 12. This same spirit was in the Jews prompting them to murder the Saviour. ¶ *Abode not in the truth.* He was created good and happy, but fell from his first estate, by his own evil choice. The Scripture tells us only of the event of this angelic fall, not of its causes or its history. The event only now sadly affects us. ¶ *He is a liar.* Evil and falsehood are united, and the malice of the devil and his lying are both equally his nature. So with man; as he deceives he becomes cruel, and as he falls from virtue he becomes false. So that we may take warning from this fact, that wickedness is false and weak. It rages, but soon shows its own folly and shame. ¶ *The father of it.* The inventor of lies, and the patron of liars. The systems of idolatry were his inventions anciently. Heresies and schisms are his modern plans. While in the heart of individuals, he keeps up the same list of follies and vices as ever.

46. *Which of you convinceth Me.* Who has *convicted* Me of doing any thing sinful in my words or works? The word means to convict a person of that which may be justly reproved. So John xvi. 8. ¶ *Of sin.* Sin in life or error in doctrine. The question is searching, for the chapter begins with a malicious attempt to injure Jesus in the matter of the woman taken in sin.

47. *Heareth God's words.* "Let him then who would understand God's words ask himself whether he hears them with the ears of his heart. For there are some who do not deign to hear God's commands even with their bodily ears; and there are others who do this, but do not embrace them with their heart's desire; and there are others again who receive God's words readily, yea are touched even to tears: but who afterwards go back to their sins again; and therefore cannot be said to hear the word of God, because they neglect to practise it."—*St. Gregory*

48. *Say we not well.* Did we not very properly say this? The speaker and His hearers get further and further

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. "Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?

a Zech. 1. 5; He. 11. 13.

asunder. ¶ *A Samaritan.* Or we perhaps would say, "*no better than* a Samaritan." They were despised by the Jews as heretics and mongrels, neither of true faith nor pure blood. See ch. iv. 9. ¶ *And hast a devil.* In Greek *a demon.* This is not a charge of a malicious spirit in Jesus, but rather of an *insane* one. For the Jews were more inclined to scoff at His claims, seeing Him in the weakness of the flesh, than to be angry with His rebukes. They despised them. To have a demon with them signified to be driven about by a wild fanatical spirit, to want judgment and consistency. And we are not to wonder at this charge, for either we must believe Jesus to be the Son of God, or honesty will force us to something like the same conviction.

49. *I have not a devil.* "Though you ascribe the miracles which you see to Beelzebub, and my words to a spirit of evil, yet I convict you of falsehood, since I honor God, which demons do not willingly do." Evil spirits were thought to be put in great agony by the very mention of the name of God. Hence to give honor to Him voluntarily was a direct and irrefragable answer to this charge.

50. *I seek not mine own glory.* "As one led by a private spirit or demon would do. I seek the glory of God, and I leave the vindication of my name to Him." Though the Jews could not understand His patience, we can read in it the invincibleness of true innocence and faith in God. It is now the strong argument of the divinity of our faith that it was perfected in the person of its Author, by patience under disgrace and suffering. Jesus made no sign of restlessness under their contumelious charges, but announced that He left His character and cause with God, who would judge and determine the issue.

51. *Keep my saying.* If any man regards my teaching and obeys it. In its enlarged sense, as applying to us, this keeping His saying, signifies to enter into covenant with Christ, to receive the doctrines, undertake the promises and keep the commands of the Christian religion. ¶ *Never see death.* See. ch. xi. 26. The doctrine of eternal life, which is expressed in this emphatic style is, that the Christian does not die as they who are not regenerate. He departs from this life, but the curse is removed, so that he rests in hope, sleeps in Jesus, and does not see the anguish, nor taste the bitterness of death, whose *sting is sin.* 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

52. *Now we know.* This assertion of pure spiritual life was so entirely beyond their perception in the state of mind in which they were, that they repeat the charge of utter derangement in Jesus, as beyond all question. And thus prejudice, which will not give way to the truth, must lead on its victim to bold and rude denial of the truth of spiritual doctrine. The Jews supposed that they had an unanswerable argument, for Abraham and the other saints were dead, and they had been loved of God. Yet we can see that their objection was foolish, as it was founded on a gross mistake and misinterpretation of their own Scriptures. So should we be modest in hearing the truth, lest we are led into the same folly.

53. *Whom makest thou thyself?* For if Abraham, the friend of God, who

and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Veri-

a Gen. 22; He. 11. 13.

believed His word, and it was counted to him for righteousness, who received precious promises, with all the rest, were dead, then, they supposed that Jesus must be convicted of error in making a claim such as He did for His followers.

54, 55. See notes, chap. v. 31.

56. *Rejoiced to see my day.* Rejoiced to see, in such shadows and signs as were given him, the future redemption of the race. It is an ingenious and valuable suggestion of Bp. Warburton, that Abraham saw this vision of redemption in the scene of his offering his son Isaac, which was intended as a lesson in actions instead of words of the future fulfilment of the promises made to him by God. And Grotius says, "He truly gained the reward of his trust in God, then especially, when he received Isaac as it were from the dead Heb. xi. 13.); for from hence he understood, what God would especially require, and how He would perform it. And from this fact that mystic proverb took its source, *In the mount of Lord it will be provided.*" ¶ *My day.* "It admits of doubt whether He is speaking here of the *temporal* day of the Lord, viz. His coming in the flesh, or of that day which knows neither setting or rising. I doubt not however that our Father Abraham knew the whole."—*St. Augustine.* The word day includes, 1. The time of Christ, and is often used in this sense. 2. *The Dispensation* or Christian Covenant, which was *kept hid* in the previous imperfect dispensations, in shadows, even as the light of a lantern, to guide those who desired to see. ¶ *He saw it.* By faith, and in the actions and symbols of His faith. Thus speaks the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises (the fulfilment of them), but *having seen them afar off, and were persuaded and embraced them.*" xi. 13. So that in their promises and sacrifices they saw foreshadowed a future Saviour. And as the Son of God was from everlasting, the very Jehovah who talked with Abraham, so did Abraham truly see Him, in the form of man. Gen. xviii. 2, 20, 22. ¶ *Was glad.* It was therefore no vague vision, but one which filled him with joy, such as he must have felt after the scene which is recorded Gen. xxii., in which the covenant of future blessings was renewed to him. Now as Abraham believed the Lord Jehovah when appearing to him as a man, so ought Abraham's children to have had faith in Him when incarnate in the flesh.

57. *Fifty years.* Jesus is believed to have been about thirty-three years old at this time. The Jews use a round number, as any number of tens would be far short of the centuries back to the age of Abraham. ¶ *Hast thou seen Abraham?* Of course as a man He had not. How is it possible to avoid seeing that Jesus asserts for Himself a Divine pre-existent nature? For the answer to this question, in order to be an answer, must touch the question at some point, or be nothing to the purpose.

58. *Verily.* See note, ch. iii. 5. ¶ *Before Abraham was.* Not only

ly, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was,[a] I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, [b]going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

a Ex. 3. 14; Is. 43. 13; Col. 1. 17; Re. 1. 8.
b Lu. 4. 30.

CHAPTER IX.

AND as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind, from *his* birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

was I there to see him, but I was existing before his day. Not as man, but as the Son of God. ¶ *I am.* This is an unmistakable use of the Divine name, and refers us to Exodus iii. 14. "And God said unto Moses, *I am that I am:* and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *I am* hath sent me unto you." And this is put beyond question by three reasons, chiefly, 1. That any other explanation makes the passage absurd, as has been shown by the perplexed interpretations of those who seek to patch up another meaning. 2. The Jews so understood him as the next verse shows. If they were mistaken could Jesus have left them in the error? 3. The vast multitude of the Christians have so understood it for centuries. God would not suffer the Church to fall as a body into error on a point so vital, for that would represent Him as choosing a Church to keep the truth, and yet permitting it to fall into idolatries and heresies. The words here, and in Exodus, are not grammatical. They are not subject to the rules of language, for they cannot be used of man. They signify the simple *being* of God, as having no reference to time, but dwelling in one everlasting present.

59. *Then took they up stones, &c.* This was the legal punishment for *blasphemy*, that is, for assuming or pretending to the prerogatives and powers of the Divine Being. Lev. xxiv. 16. This shows in what sense the hearers understood the words of Christ. They found stones probably by tearing up the pavement of the temple court, and hurried beyond all care of the place by horror at the words just spoken, they undertook to slay Jesus in the very temple. ¶ *Jesus hid Himself.* Either by miracle, as assuming an invisibility, and so passing unseen and untouched from their midst, which would have been a proof of His divinity; or, by such natural means as were at hand, escaping from their rage, as His hour had not yet come. See Luke iv. 30. The former seems to be the better explanation.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *As Jesus passed by.* He was passing by some place. This happened on the following Sabbath, as Jesus was passing, possibly on His way to the temple. ¶ *From His birth.* Therefore *incurable* by any human power. There could be no chance of suspicion as to the truth of the miracle.

2. *Master, who did sin.* It is well known to us that many diseases are the natural effects of luxury and vice. It was also true under the special providence of the Mosaic law, and the effect followed not only in the individual, but also in his posterity. This the second commandment declares to be a mode of Divine justice, "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation." The prophet Ezekiel had foretold a change in this respect, that "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Ch. xviii. 3, 4. ¶ *This man.* He could not have sinned before his own birth. But it is probable that the question proceeded on the common notion of some of the ancient nations of the permanency of the human soul and its transmigration into different bodies. Many Jews believed this. So the question would imply that this man had sinned in other bodies, before his birth

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken,

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in this. ¶ *Or his parents.* There are deformities appearing at times in men, which are to be properly attributed to the sins of parents. and blindness may possibly be ranked among them. Our Lord does not deny this *law*, but only this *instance*.

3. *Neither hath this man sinned.* That is, he has not sinned above others, to such a degree as to cause this blindness. Of course our Lord does not say any thing of the man or his parents, which implies that they did not sin as other people, but that their sins were not the peculiar crimes which produced this effect. The Jews were men of harsh judgment, and ascribed most of the misfortunes of others to some previous crime. ¶ *The works of God.* Miracles, the special works of the Messiah's presence upon the earth. These our Lord ascribes to God, for they were beyond the powers of man. This blind man was one of a series, who had been taught by calamity, and prepared by neglect and blindness, to show forth the glory of God, first in his cure, next in his manful defence of the integrity of his Saviour. How stirring the thought, that of all the thousands of Jerusalem, the rich, the grand, the noble, this blind beggar was put there by Providence to be the recipient of a Saviour's love. And there is no poverty or misfortune, reader, that can debar the approach of the Saviour, if the soul is docile and patient and eager for truth. And the calamity under which you groan, may be like the thorn in the flesh of St. Paul, a blessing in disguise. While you are learning to bear it, but yet are wondering at it, others may see the work of God made manifest in your weakness. If you are a believer, you know that the unequal dispensations of earthly benefits are all to be made right, are now in yourself made right, if you truly see the grace of God working in your heart. Jesus *suffered* before He entered into glory. St. Paul gloried in his infirmities. May not we at least bear ours?

4. *The works of Him, &c.* It was now the Sabbath, and the Saviour foresaw the commotion which the miracle would occasion, as the passions of the Jews were more bitterly set against Him (see ch. v. 1–16), yet He confesses that there is a *must*, a duty upon Him to do this work. ¶ *While it is day.* While He was living among men. The day is suited to walking around and to work, the night is unfit for them. Jesus must do this work now at the covenient season, and go on to do others like it, for His mission was rapidly coming to its end. ¶ *Night cometh.* Night is the symbol of death in almost all languages. So in Scripture, night, sleep, rest from labors, &c. are used to represent the period after death. ¶ *No man can work.* After death Jesus would not be moving around among men to fulfil such offices. He was a legate, and must diligently do all that was required of Him. "There will be night wherein none can work, but only receive for that which he has worked. While thou livest do that which thou wilt do: for beyond it is neither faith, nor labor, nor repentance."—*St. Chrysostom.*

5. *As long as I am in the world, &c.* During His natural life, Jesus was the true light of revealed truth, the great ensample of piety while He lived. Hence He marks that period as the *day* in which He must work. He is the light, as He is an ensample of a godly life, the perfect Teacher of mankind in the will of God, and the Revealer of the destiny of man beyond this life. In

he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he ‖anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go, wash [a]in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and [b]washed, and came seeing.

8 ¶ The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he*.

‖ Or, *spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.* [a] Neh. 3. 15. [b] 2 Ki. 5. 14.

respect to these things the world had been sitting in darkness. And to do the work of giving light to man, He came in the flesh. Therefore He says here, *As long as, &c.*, for all this work was to be gathered into one glorious centre of light, in His life.

6. *Made clay.* It is said that the Jews esteemed spittle in some cases medicinal, and forbade it to be applied to diseased eyes on the Sabbath. But this has little to do with the matter. Two things are evident. Jesus intended to send this man along a conspicuous road for some distance, in such a state as not only to make his cure public, but to show that He meant it to be so, and that *too on the Sabbath day*; thus crossing diametrically the Pharisaic prejudices. 2. He therefore established an *immediate connection* between Himself and the man, so that by the ball of clay upon each eye all should see and inquire into the reason of them, and that the man himself should know and testify that his cure came from Jesus. The clay was not medicinal, nor the spittle, nor the washing, any more than the washings of Naaman (2 Kings v.), but the man's faith and obedience, and the power of God working through them, cured him. The clay was as it were the seal of the Saviour, bearing the impression of His hand, and showing the power of cure to be His.

7. *The pool of Siloam.* Shiloh, Siloa and Siloam were forms of the same word, which was one of the most honored names of the Messiah, and signified *Sent*. We make little account of such coincidences; but the Jews were peculiarly apt to catch such allusions, and draw inferences from them. It seems too that St. John has given the sense of the word here as important, in indicating the reason why that pool was chosen. For St. John, in many incidents, shows that he was impressed with the ancient prophecy of Jacob, concerning the Shiloh. He has most frequently of all recorded the claim of Jesus to be "sent from God." This fountain was sent out from Mount Moriah, flowing from the temple hill into

The Pool of Siloam.

the pool. Isaiah calls the gracious providence of God "the waters of Shiloah that go softly" (Is. viii. 6), which Milton has paraphrased, "Siloa's fount that flows fast by the oracles of God." The Saviour honored God, and combines all those sacred associations which pious Jews should have rejoiced in. He shows them, on this their Sabbath, that their Shiloh, the One sent to give them true rest, was then among them.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had

8. *Sat and begged.* Therefore, 1. He was a man well known to all. Who is better known than the beggar who sits by the highway? The crowd forgets the passer by, but remembers the blind beggar who excited its compassion. 2. He was a man of the humblest class, and in this case, a man who had learned the noblest wisdom in that state of humility. He was too low to be proud of his phylacteried Pharisees, and fears not to ask them questions, and be excommunicated by them for proclaiming facts; such courage have blindness and beggary taught him in the sad bygone years.

9. *I am he.* There is a straightforwardness in this man from first to last, which shows that Jesus had worked a cure in his soul as well as body, and sent him, for the time, as His defender. He is a man without a doubt or quibble. "I am he," do not doubt it.

13. *Pharisees.* This was done on the next day. The miracle was too public to be passed over. It has made a crisis. The Pharisees must meet it. And these who bring the man had too great fear of the new law (v. 22) to run the risk of concealing the man or sharing his confession.

15. *He put clay, &c.* The man deals in facts, and confounds all the subtleties brought against him. And while we hold fast to the simple wisdom of that which we do verily know of spiritual truth, we are safe. The man whose heart is fixed on the great truths of his salvation, is not to be blown about by every wind of doctrine. "His house is built on a rock."

16. *A division among them.* The matter had been so fully discussed by Jesus, before this, that some could not but take a different view. Though they could not allow all the claims of Jesus, they could not deny His works to be those which a sinner could not do.

17. *What sayest thou, &c.* He had heard the discussion, and is now asked this question that he may get his cue and frame his story again to suit them. For it is by no means likely that they would have troubled him to answer again if they had anticipated his answer. The question seems ambiguous, but probably signifies, "What do you say of Him *who* opened thine eyes?" i. e., To which side do you incline? ¶ *He is a prophet.* Fancy the start that this bold word caused in that sapient assembly. The soldiers had admired the language of Jesus, Nicodemus

been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These *words* spake his parents,[a] because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, [b]Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

a Ch. 7, 13; & 19. 38; Ac. 5. 13. *b* Josh. 7. 19; 1 Sa. 6. 5.

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had put in a timid plea for Him, but for the first time in that assembly, from the lips of a blind beggar, came the bold words—"*He is a prophet.* How can you doubt it? The fact is plain as the sun. I tell you again He opened my eyes." Let us take this man for a teacher, and learn of him to guide our hearts and reasonings by truth, and when once got, never to yield it, unless for higher and purer truth. v. 38. The poor and simple often learn, in their rough way, to grasp realities, which the learned seek for in vain.

18, 19. *Is this your son, &c.* The Pharisees give them three questions, that in one of their answers they may find a loophole of escape. Is this your son? Do you say he was born blind? How does he now see? Why was this? Evidently to set aside the witness of the man in favor of the Saviour. They have no argument, and of course resort to stratagem and intimidation. The parents give up at once; the son has no idea of giving back an inch. He does not seem to know how to do it.

20–22. *We know, &c.* As far as it was safe, they go; they have *prudence* enough not to deny any thing, only they excuse themselves from any part of the discussion. They were afraid, and have no idea of getting themselves into trouble for a son, whom they had left to beg his bread in his affliction. And while we feel no great regard for them, they yet establish the fact of the *blindness from the birth.* The fact is also established by their confession that the son could not have been cured by any natural medicines: for these would have required a long time and no little trouble and expense. So that the Sanhedrim is again baffled. ¶ *That He was Christ.* The Messiah. This was the one question before them, and they have silenced all testimony by their previous act, except such as will come out in spite of them. It is a poor faith that needs persecution to sustain it. ¶ *Should be put out of the synagogue.* Excommunicated and cut off from the covenant of Moses, either for a season or finally. The Jews seem to have had three sorts of excommunication. 1. The exclusion from the synagogue and temple, so that no Jew would have any communication with them. 2. The additional punishment of the confiscation of all a man's property; and 3. The final, total cutting off from the commonwealth of Israel, by death, or at least by a civil and ecclesiastical death, which left the man as a heathen to the uncovenanted providence of the Almighty.

24. *Give God the praise.* "We con-

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses; *as for* this *fellow*, we know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that [a]God

a Job 27. 9; & 35. 12; Ps. 18. 41; & 34. 15; Is. 1. 15; Zech. 7. 13.

fess the fact of your cure, having examined your parents, but you must agree with us, that the praise belongs to God. Rejoice at your cure and let the matter rest." Some would have this to be a form of administering an oath, but for this there is no good reason. For the Pharisees admit the deed, but desire to cast odium on the doer, and to this sophism the man makes his reply. ¶ *We know.* We who have a right from our learning, holiness and power, have decided for you, that it was done by imposture. You, a poor man, born in sin, &c., cannot know much about it. So rest it upon our declaration and be satisfied." This is exactly that thing which the man has no notion of doing. As poor Luther said to a similar diet or assembly of persecuting divines, so he, "I can no more, I stand here." ¶ *A sinner.* A criminal impostor and deceiver of the people, and a man who breaks the Sabbath.

25. *Whether He be, &c.* "Of that I am not the judge, and excuse myself from denial or assent. That is not my concern at this present, and if you are satisfied, so let it be. But there is one thing beyond dispute in my mind and on that I fasten. I was blind and now I see." There is a masterly wisdom in this repetition of the fact, and avoiding the accusation. For suppose he had denied that: he would have been launched at once into a question of the proper mode of keeping the Sabbath, and have lost his vantage ground. The Pharisees were too subtle for him there. But it is his mission to establish the fact of his cure, and Divine grace guards him in holding to it alone

26. *How opened He thine eyes?* Like dogs they follow the first scent which opens. As the man had passed by the accusation, they seem to take it for granted that he has admitted it, and seek to push him into some confusion or contradiction. "Tell us *how* it was done, and we will show you that He broke the Sabbath-day." Of the *how*, he knew no more than they, and strange as the means were, he has been too often and too long a despised beggar to be afraid of a laugh now at repeating them. How clay and Siloam did this, he knew not; that they did it was enough for him. Most of the disputes of our day are on the question *how* the soul is regenerated. The believer rejoices in the fact, and may be wise to neglect the subtleties which disturb the peace of Christendom.

28. *Thou art His disciple.* Poor man. He meets only with a sneer of contempt from his *pious* rulers. He had stated a fact, and cannot be frightened nor scoffed out of it. ¶ *We are Moses' disciples.* "We keep the Sabbath, your Master breaks it." For it was on this thin and miserable subterfuge that they were compelled to rest.

29. *We know that God, &c.* God had sent Moses with great signs, yet, the Lord Jesus manifested greater powers. And this vaunt of the Pharisees was foolish; for Moses, with all the powers given to him, had not done such miracles of benevolence as this. ¶ *As for this fellow.* The word *fellow* is not in the original, but is properly supplied to express their meaning. They are too contemptuous to give the name of Jesus ¶ *Whence He is.* They knew,

heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they [‖]cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the [a]Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

‖ Or, *excommunicated him.* a Matt. 14. 33; 1 Jno. 5. 13.

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as they thought, that Jesus was from Nazareth, but they pretend utter, scornful ignorance of Him, as too much beneath their notice, even to be inquired about. Their pride in this case goes before a fall, for the blind man has an answer which unsettles their easy scorn entirely.

30. *A marvellous thing.* It was such, that they who were the guardians of religion, the learned teachers of the law, should not know this and yet should admit the fact of the cure. The cure by itself was enough to show from whence Christ came, for it was a work of God.

31. *We know.* It is a first principle, all know it, it is beyond dispute ¶ *God heareth not sinners.* Hears them not, to do miracles by their means. The words are to be confined to the case in hand. Power to do miracles of mercy comes from God. He grants it to those only who serve Him, and not to sinners who would use it for evil purposes. The word sinners is used in two senses in Scriptures. 1. All men are sinners, the best and the worst, since all come short of the glory of God. 2. They who break the laws of God wilfully and are disgraced by their crimes. Thus they are ranked with publicans and harlots. In this latter sense, which is the more common in the Gospels, it is here used. ¶ *Doeth His will.* Worship is the one part of piety which honors God befofore all men, obedience that part which proves the true fear of His commands in the heart. Either part without the other is vain.

32. *Since the world began.* "You speak of knowing Moses; now Moses did nothing like this. This miracle has never been heard of in all the world from the beginning; so easily, quickly, quietly performed, with means so unusual, by a power evidently divine. How then can you doubt that the greatest of all the prophets is here?" We may add even at this day that blindness from birth is in most cases beyond the reach of medicine.

33. *Could do nothing.* This was a self-evident case. And the Pharisees knew it. But they would not admit it. Thus simple minds, "babes and sucklings," are ordained and fitted to praise God. We may say that the first Christian lecture came from the lips of this man, a beggar, and confounded all gainsayers.

34. *Wast born in sins.* They cannot answer him, and so they abuse him. They cast up to him his blindness and poverty as a mark of sin and disgrace, as one who was of a corrupt race. How then could he dare to teach them, men of *pure blood* and very learned and favored of heaven? We of course smile at this inconsistency, yet the pride of the human heart is the same in all ages, though the manner of expression differs. Men despised the blind Milton and Bunyan the tinker, yet they are teaching the generations of men the truths of God. And we despise often the lowly Christian, at whose feet we would do better to sit, to learn his honest zeal, if not his opinions. ¶ *Cast him out.* The first persecution for the faith. The

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

39 ¶ And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, [a]and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

a Ro. 2. 19.

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sturdy courage of this man had made him the first to dare the powers of evil, and the first to suffer for professing the truth. See verse 22.

35. *On the Son of God.* The Messiah. "Now that you suffer contumely, are you willing to believe on the Messiah?" He had before professed only the one inference that Jesus was *a* prophet. He must now go on to the next, which was equally plain, that he was *the* Prophet, the Son of God. The question seems intended to meet his case as *excommunicate*, and to signify to him that Jesus was willing to receive him, now that the Jews had rejected him.

36. *Who is He, Lord?* Who is the Messiah? for it does not follow that he should think Jesus to be Christ, because he believed Him to be a prophet. To see this truth he needed further instruction. And as soon as Jesus, in whom he did believe, taught him who the Messiah was, he professed that faith. The word *Lord* here is equivalent to *Master*, a term of respect given by disciples to a teacher or prophet. ¶ *That I might believe.* He is willing to believe on the authority of Jesus, who had shown Himself a true Prophet. This was consistent. For he who admits the one fact, that Jesus was sent from God, *must* receive as infallibly true all that He teaches; and this man is willing to put his faith on this natural and impregnable ground. Tell me who is the Messiah, and I know that you are a true Prophet, and I will believe in the Son of God.

38. *Lord, I believe.* I believe that which you say, and bow before you with gratitude and love for the mercy already granted me. Thus Naaman, when healed by Elisha, believed that the God of Elisha was the only true God, and would thereafter sacrifice only to Him. Thus Darius, when amazed by the supernatural preservation of Daniel, believed in the Lord, and issued a decree that the men of his kingdom "should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel." Faith in practice is simple enough for the most ignorant. The doctors have not yet dissected all its secret parts in their theories, but it lives in many simple hearts to their salvation. ¶ *Worshipped Him.* He offered this worship as to the Son of God, and thus Jesus accepted it. And we know that He could have received it only as He was God, for he came to banish all worship, but that of the one living and true God, from the face of the earth.

39. *For judgment.* Not for condemnation, but for setting all things right, and for discerning between the false and true. The Pharisees were now present, and Jesus proclaims the moral of this whole series of events. His coming would establish a new covenant and new order of things, in which the proud should be punished and the humble exalted. They who should have believed first, were driven off by their pride; they who were despised of men were pressing into the kingdom of heaven. ¶ *That they which see not might see.* That the blind might see. Under this word *see* is contained the two senses of natural and spiritual sight. For this blind man had been restored in soul as well as body. And such was the verity and ardor of his faith, that he could be said emphatically to *see*, for he saw in-

CHAPTER X.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

ferences and facts concerning Christ which the Pharisees could not see. ¶ *Might be made blind.* Not by any design of God, nor by the will of Jesus, but by obstinacy and pride. These were the Pharisees. They wilfully denied the light and took refuge in lies, in order to refuse to see the claims of their Messiah. Moral truth either exalts one and purifies his inward eye, or it makes him obstinate and perverse.

41. *If ye were blind.* If the Pharisees *could* not believe, by any sort of secret decree of the Almighty, no matter how delicately adjusted in theory, then they would have been no more responsible for incredulity than the man who had been blind was therefore guilty for not seeing. This is a first principle of all religion, without which religion is a paradox. For a man to be *responsible*, he must have a free power to choose between good and evil. This, for convenience, is called *free will*, but a will not free is no more a will than a blind eye is eyesight. ¶ *Therefore your sin remaineth.* "You profess to be satisfied with your knowledge of Me. You see and recognize My acts, and claim to understand all that I have said, and to condemn Me; therefore your sin in so doing remains with you." "If ye had been blind, i. e., ignorant of the Scriptures, your offence would be by no means so heavy a one as growing out of ignorance; but now ye, seeing ye call yourselves wise and understanding in the law, your own selves condemn you."—*Theophyiact.*

CHAPTER X.

1. *I say unto you.* Jesus continues His address to the Pharisees, "those blind leaders of the blind," who had now put themselves in direct opposition to Him, by excommunicating the man who had professed faith in the power which had given him sight. This event gives occasion to this discourse and explains it. For if the followers of Jesus were to be cast out from the hopes of the Jewish covenant by these false shepherds, it was time for Him to shadow forth the lines of the *New Covenant*, into which they were to be received. And this chapter is valuable, as giving us the sketch of the New Fold, the now fast-approaching Church of Christ. The words which follow are a *parable* (ver. 6), that is, they give a likeness of the Church into which this excommunicate man, and others like him, are to be received. And if we confine ourselves to the general resemblance between sheep, a shepherd, and a fold, and the Christians, the Saviour, and the Church Covenant, we shall be forced to admire the beauty of the language, and to praise God for the certainty of this precious gift. As usual, the ground of the discourse of Jesus is to be found in the inspired words of the Old Testament. There the Messiah is predicted as a Shepherd. Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Zech. xiii. 7; Ps. xxiii. 1. The people of Israel were the *flock* (Ezek. xxxiv. 1–19), and their guides the subordinate shepherds. ¶ *Sheepfold.* These were probably built with greater care in Palestine than in other countries, as it was necessary not only to prevent the flocks from wandering, but also to defend them from the attacks of robbers and wild beasts. It is said that there were usually two doors in the stone walls which surrounded them; a large one by which the flock passed in and out, and a smaller, by which a man could enter to select one from the sheep for slaughter or sacrifice. The sheep is a gentle, docile animal, needing the care of man, and soon learning to trust to his protection and become obedient to his will. It is fitted, in many of its habits, to represent the faith, trust, obedience, patience, and innocence which distinguish the believer in God. The sheepfold is therefore a similitude of the *Covenant.* 1. Of that which once embraced the Jewish people. 2. Of that better covenant which sprang out of the

2 But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth

old, and obtained the name of Catholic, as receiving all mankind who will enter it. Now the shepherd enters his own fold by the doors; a robber, not having the key, must scale the walls. Jesus then declares Himself a true shepherd, having the key of David, i. e., truly fulfilling the ancient prophecies, and so manifesting Himself no robber, but the true Shepherd. Therefore the Jews, understanding this inference, put to Him the question, *Are you the Messiah?* (ver. 24) and Jesus answers plainly that He is. It is vain, therefore, to seek here for a parable of the door, in the person of Christ, for Jesus is not yet saying how Christians enter, but how He enters, that is, how He proves Himself once for all to the Jews to be the Head of their Covenant, the true Shepherd. We ought to find out the plain meaning of a parable, before we confuse our minds with *inferences*, however pious and edifying they may prove. And the assertion here is, "I enter and prove myself the Messiah over your fold or Church, though you banish my followers." ¶ *A thief.* To a sheepfold such an one would be a *thief;* to the Jewish state, a false Christ, stealing and ruining souls. ¶ *A robber.* A violent, murderous thief. As if He had said, "If I am not the true Messiah, then I would be of such a character as these, a petty impostor or a gross criminal, and you could detect the falsehood at once." The *inference* from all this is just that a true pastor should be unlike these pretenders, and should be known by his love of order and truth, and his tender care over "God's heritage."

2. *By the door.* That which answers to the door of a fold seems to be the ancient prophecies, or the Scriptures generally, which Jesus, by fulfilling in His own person, had caused to attest Him as the Christ, and no deceiver. ¶ *Is the shepherd.* This is evident in the case of sheep. For the shepherd has the key, which a stranger has not. And Jesus fulfilled the covenant of Moses, by the wonderful powers, the divine wisdom, and the holy life which He manifested. He came evidently to His own, not as a stranger, by violence and wrong. And a good pastor must seek to prove himself like Jesus, by doing and being all that is required of him in the Scriptures

3 *The porter openeth.* The undershepherd. The large flocks were guarded by many assistant shepherds, probably watched at night by each in turn. *Porter*, here, probably means one of these watchmen. The darkness of night does not hide the true shepherd. Whenever he comes the faithful porter recognizes him and admits him. Thus Jesus had shown Himself to the Jews, and was recognized by His own, and would lead them. Or referring the whole to the dawn of day, the language pictures the shepherd coming in the morning to relieve the watchman of his guard, and to lead out his flock to pasture. ¶ *Sheep hear His voice.* This animal is remarkable for its docility in this respect, and is the most easily guided of any animals by those who are kind to it. It conceives an affection for its guide, and follows his voice. So with the servants of Jehovah among the Jews. They heard the voice of their Messiah, and followed Him by a holy instinct. Thus at a *call*, Matthew, Peter, John and others left all and followed Jesus. And there is ever in the earnest penitent, a sense of want and loss, "a void the world can never fill," to which the Saviour speaks, nor ever speaks in vain. Thus He spake to "the weary and heavy laden," and they heard His voice. ¶ *By name.* Men who spend their lives with any animals learn to do this. They detect different traits and features in them, and give them names. A farmer will call his oxen, a hunter his dogs, by names,

his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

and apparently receive some signs of recognition from them. Thus it is with shepherds. And the good Shepherd has not only a general oversight of His people, but calls each by name, enters into his wants and trials, hears his prayers, loves and cherishes him, with a personal affection. Ps. xxiii. 1, 2. ¶ *Leadeth them out.* For pasture by day. This is thrown in to show that the true believer learns to *follow* the Saviour, and to be guided by Him to the "green pastures and still waters," where his soul finds support and comfort.

4. *He goeth before them.* How charming this picture of the shepherd followed to the grassy slopes, along the devious paths, of a still dewy morning, by the files of snow-white sheep. And may we not catch from this picture the lessons of that *spiritual obedience*, that blessed instinct of grace, which makes us follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth?

5. *Will flee from him.* Let any strange person come upon a flock of sheep, and this is manifest at once. In the southern States, where the cattle and sheep are attended to mostly by colored keepers, they betray the greatest fear, and run terrified away from the presence of a white person. These habits of sheep were familiar to the Jews, who raised them in great numbers. The corresponding truth is now as plain, that the flock which receives the true word of sound doctrine, will be shocked and alarmed by false and heretical teaching; the soul which loves to obey the intimations of the Good Shepherd, and lives in constant communion with Him, will instinctively reject the temptings of false teaching and unclean living.

6. *Parable.* Similitude. See note, Matt. xiii. 3. They saw the picture which the words held forth, but could not perceive the application to the church of the new Covenant hidden in them.

7. *I am the door.* This is not an explanation, so much as a continuation of the parable. Jesus declares Himself the means by which the soul of man enters into the covenant of salvation. This is by obedience to Him as the Shepherd, by faith in Him as the means ordained to our salvation. Eph. ii. 18. ¶ *Of the sheep.* Those souls which believed in Christ.

8. *Before Me.* Not those prophets and saints who came with other duties, but such only as came in that age, claiming to be the *Messiah*. Says St. Chrysostom: "Our Lord having reproached the Jews with blindness, they might have said, we are not blind, but we avoid Thee as a deceiver. He therefore gives the marks which distinguish a robber and deceiver from the true shepherd. There is an allusion here to Antichrist, and to certain false Christs which had been, and were to be." But as there is no account of *false Christs*, coming before the Saviour it seems good to understand it of any and all teachers, who taught salvation by any other means than by Christ. Thus the pagan philosophers and lawgivers are meant, who were boasters of great things. Also such Jewish rabbis as had corrupted the true religion. ¶ *Thieves and robbers.* Were such injurers of souls as thieves and robbers were of flocks. See Ezek. xxxiv. 2–4. ¶ *Not hear them.* This we may learn

9 [a]I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

11 [b]I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

a Ch. 14. 6; Eph. 2. 18. *b* Is. 40. 11; Ez. 34. 12, 23; & 37. 24.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and [c]leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and [d]know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

c Zech. 11. 16, 17. *d* 2 Tim. 2. 19.

by the story of Elijah. He mourned to Jehovah that "the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thy altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword," and was answered, "yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel which have not bowed unto Baal." 1 Kings xix. 14, 18. And if in that dark age of idolatry there was a remnant of those who would not hear false teachers, it shows us that God never leaves Himself without true believers; that the value of our piety is not that it is popular with men, but that it insures us the love of God.

9. *By Me.* The blood of Jesus is the only seal of the covenant of salvation. Entrance into it must be by faith in Him. ¶ *Shall be saved.* Shall be safe; here, possessed of sure promises and a hope of final happiness. ¶ *Go in and out.* As sheep do who are saved from danger in a peaceful land and have no fear of evil. So the believer dwells securely in faith. In the Old Testament these same words are found, meaning to live securely. Deut. xxviii. 6; 1 Sam. xxix. 6.

10. *The thief, &c.* This would be the only object of a thief entering a sheepfold. The false teacher, who comes some other way than by Christ, if such should not be his intention, yet must, by his false teaching, destroy those who trust in Him. For some heretics are wicked impostors, others deluded fanatics; both destroy by deceiving the minds of their followers. ¶ *That they might have life.* In opposition to destroyers, Christ came to give salvation to the soul, which is the true life. My coming is to give a covenant with promises precious and sure. ¶ *More abundantly.* Spiritual life depends on faith, hope and love. As they may be increased, so life, in this sense, may be had more abundantly. Christ came to give believers a better covenant, and to multiply for them the means of grace. He gives us not only a bare hope of pardon, but "exceeding great and precious promises." 2 Pet. i. 4.

11. *The good Shepherd.* Opposed to a hireling. How sweetly does this word *good* sound upon our ears, when we learn that it marks that wonderful proof of the mercy and love of Jesus, that He died to redeem us. ¶ *Giveth his life.* A shepherd defends his flock at the peril of his life, as did David. 1 Sam. xvii. 34—36. And that this was the prominent meaning to be received by the Jews at this juncture, is plain, from the fact that Jesus did not begin as yet to reveal plainly even to the disciples His approaching death. See Mark x. 32.

12. *An hireling.* One hired for a season to take care of the sheep, and who is not influenced by true love for them. As the world goes, such an one would not risk his life for the property of another. The contrast heigh-

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And [a]other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be [b]one fold, *and* one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because [c]I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

a Is. 56. 8.

b Ez. 37. 22; Eph. 2. 14; 1 Pe. 2. 25. *c* Is. 53. 7, 8, 12; He. 2. 9.

tens the picture. We see the priceless-ness of that love, which is shed upon us without stint. It is because we are Christ's own, because He redeemed us not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with His precious blood, that nothing can separate us from His love, while we continue faithful.

13. *Careth not for the sheep.* Not enough to risk life. But the good Shepherd gave all for them. Should not we give all, and dare all for His sake, that we may aid and protect His followers, who are our brethren?

14. *Am known of mine.* Christians know their Lord in a better sense than others can. They love Him, put all their trust in Him, and find Him to be their helper and defender. This kind of affectionate intimacy is elegantly displayed in the Psalms of David, which on this account are made use of in the liturgy of the Church. They offer us the picture of a man after God's own heart, who was gifted to express those pious, delicate instincts, and feelings which are common to believers in all ages.

15. *As the Father, &c.* See Matt. xi. 27. ¶ *I lay down my life for the sheep.* This is a solemn declaration of the atonement of Jesus, that He might procure for His people the pardon of sins and the favor of God. It was founded on the perfect knowledge which He had of the will of God. By that knowledge He could know how to redeem mankind. It was voluntary, the suggestion of His own mercy; He laid down His life, it was not taken from Him.

16. *And other sheep I have.* He had them by *right*, though not then by possession. Ps. ii. 8. The present tense makes the assertion very emphatic. He is speaking of the Church, yet to be gathered, and regards its individual members, as even then in His possession. These other sheep are the Gentiles, who were to be converted. ¶ *Not of this fold.* Not of the Jewish nation—"strangers from the commonwealth of Israel" as St. Paul terms them. This fold was the covenant of Moses, as St. Paul speaks, Gal. iv. 24, 25. Gentiles were never required to enter into all the relations of that covenant. Moses did not require Jethro, Elisha, Naaman, or others, to become Jewish proselytes, but only to worship Jehovah. And we may rejoice unfeignedly, that we have a better covenant and a wider fold than they who lived before the Saviour's age. ¶ *Them also must I bring.* For this purpose Christ came, that He might offer salvation to all mankind. It is to be noted that our Lord veils this intended mercy to the Gentiles in this figurative style, in order that the Jews might not have any excuse for being offended. They were angered at the least mention of the Gentiles being put on an equality with them. ¶ *One fold.* One covenant. There is a divine necessity revealed in Scripture for the *Unity of the Church.* There can be but one body, where there is one head—but one faith where there is only one means of salvation. Differences of opinion, of ceremonies, of certain non-essentials, are allowed us, but a certain practical unity of being, and a desire for essential union of spiritual life must characterize the holy Church. This sacred truth the Epistle to the Ephesians defends. See Eph. ch. iv. 3–7. ¶ *One shepherd.* One Lord over Jew and Gentile. Eph. ii. 14. We may be sure that though our Lord bears with our sectarian differen-

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

19 ¶ There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.[a] Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

a Ex. 4. 11; Ps. 94. 9; & 146. 8.

ces, His will is, that all His followers should seek to be united in faith and love. While we have charity for all who differ from us, let us not cease to deplore the divisions that prevail.

17. *I lay down my life.* Jesus declares that He came to death of *His own will*, neither forced to it by the rage of men, nor by any compulsion that could not be resisted. He died to save the world, and esteemed that redemption so precious that He freely gave His life for it. Therefore the Father, who had always loved Him from the beginning, showed proof of it, in giving Him the "heathen for His inheritance." Ps. ii. 8. ¶ *That I may, &c.* And by rising from the dead make the work of justification perfect, rob death of its terrors, and lead the way to eternal life. See Rom. iv. 24, 25. Heb. ii. 14–18.

18. *No man taketh it from me.* This was most important to be understood by His hearers, for men judge by the sight, and not by faith. The disciples were to see Jesus taken, and by cruel hands crucified. In spite of all His warnings, they would forsake Him and flee. It was only afterwards, when beholding Him risen and receiving the Spirit of truth, that they would understand and recall these prophétic declarations. We see that they were exactly true. For Jesus showed that He knew perfectly the treachery of Judas, and the hour fixed for betraying Him. And He could have left Jerusalem in time to escape. Besides, He had such power to save His own life, as if He had called down legions of angels for a guard. But He yielded to the bitter cup, which could not pass from Him, and yet mankind have redemption in His blood. How should we love Him for His mercy in designing, His willingness in consenting, to save us by His own suffering. ¶ *I have power.* Not only power, as the Son of God, but also *authority* from God as the Son of man, to rise again at the allotted time. ¶ *To take it again.* To take up the life which He laid down, the body which for a while He had left in the sleep of death. ¶ *This commandment.* This power was given in the command which was put on Him, to save man from hell. Wherever God gives a command, though it be to one dead in trespasses and sins to arise and live, He gives with the decree, *power* to do it. No one can plead as an excuse that He is unable to fulfil the Divine command to repent and believe.

20. *Hath a devil.* See ch. vii. 20. ¶ *Is mad.* Is crazy, beside himself. So that in the minds of these objectors the two things were distinct, the having a devil being the cause perhaps of the madness.

21. *Can a devil, &c.* These are not the words or works of a possessed person. Demons may have had a limited power, as bad men sometimes seem to have, to juggle at miracles, and appear to do strange things; but the Almighty, in mercy to us, keeps the diabolic trickery in narrow bounds, that the true believer need not be deceived. So the blind man (ch. ix. 31) declares that a sinner had never nor could ever open "the eyes of one that was born blind."

22. *Feast of the Dedication.* This festival was not one of those appointed by Divine command, but was observed

23 And [a]Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou ‖ make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 [b]But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

a Ac. 3. 11; & 5. 12. ‖ Or, *hold us in suspense.*

b 1 Jno. 4. 6.

by a grateful nation to celebrate and keep in memory a signal deliverance. See 1 Mac. iv. 19; 2 Mac. x. 8. Hence says Grotius, "From our Saviour's countenancing this festival with His presence, festivals of mere human institution, in commemoration of public blessings, may lawfully be appointed by public authority." This feast was appointed by Judas Maccabæus, at the time of his purifying the temple from the disgusting abominations of the tyrant Antiochus. It was also called the *feast of lights*, as the city was illuminated during the eight nights of its observance. It began the 25th of the month Cisleu, answering to the beginning of our December. ¶ *Winter.* And therefore cold. The porch in which he was found, for the sake of warmth, was on the east side of the temple, open to the sun.

24. *Tell us plainly.* Without any parable or figure of speech. These Jews may have asked this honestly, from the desire of intellectual conviction, or else dishonestly, that they might accuse Jesus before the authorities. If the former, it teaches us a lesson, always needed, that man must receive the message of truth in the very manner in which God sends it to him. And again, that they who will not hear the voice of the Good Shepherd are not hindered by any want of plainness in Him, nor by want of natural capacity for understanding Him, but by their own perversity and pride. The Jews wanted a worldly prince, and they would not understand the message which proved their Messiah to be such an one as Jesus of Galilee.

25. *I told you.* In words of my own choice, which were plain enough for your understanding. See ch. v. 19; viii. 36, 56. ¶ *The works, &c.* Miracles were plain proofs of a divine commission, as Nicodemus confessed. Ch. iii. 2. They were beyond human powers, they were all good, they were at that crisis an irrefragable proof, not of an ordinary prophet, but of the Messiah. ¶ *In my Father's name.* Done in God's name, and therefore as *His Son*, proving by the authority of God, that I speak the truth in making myself His Son. For God could not be supposed to lend His authority to a deceiver.

26. *Not my sheep.* "You have not the humble, docile temper of those who become disciples, but are proud and worldly in your minds." They had come for plain words, but words of their own sort, words teaching a worldly king. When Jesus plainly declares His Divine Majesty, by which He is Messiah, they show their obstinacy in seeking to stone Him. ¶ *As I said, &c.* See ch. viii. 47.

27. *My sheep.* My disciples and all such as are of humble mind, who have no preconceived theory of what the truth *should* teach, but receive it as it is already taught. And these inquirers, not manifesting that spirit, were for the time being not the sheep. They might afterwards become so. ¶ *Hear my voice.* Which signifies not mere hearing only but understanding and obeying, as sheep who come to the call of their own keepers. ¶ *They follow me.* They do as I teach them, believe and trust in Me, and are prepared to stake their all upon my word. The figure of *following.*

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all: and none is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

30 I and *my* Father are one.

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here taken from sheep, was also illustrated by the twelve disciples, who went about with the Lord, and took part in all His life on earth. Now it signifies that Christian life drawn in the Scriptures, which we must lead to be *like Him*, in mind and spirit.

28. *Eternal life.* See ch. v. 24. ¶ *Shall never perish.* Or "they shall not *perish eternally*." Our Saviour was engaged here in speaking plainly, and it would have been strange if He should have turned aside to instruct these unbelievers in the mysteries of election: a doctrine requiring far more knowledge of divine truth than was then possessed. There is a sublime truth in His words, exactly agreeing with the circumstances in which they were uttered. He, a man standing among them, promised to save eternally all who believed on Him, followed Him, and continued in His covenant unto the end of life. And though they saw only His human form and were anxious for temporal power, yet *His power to save* was infinitely great and glorious beyond all their conceptions. They thought that they could *stone Him;* but He promises eternal life. This is the evident sense of the passage. Men who venture beyond this must beware lest they put their own inferences upon the hearer as the word of God. All sincere believers who receive the covenant of Christ, and continue in it to the end, fulfilling all its conditions, will be saved. No others will. They will be saved by grace, justified by faith, judged by "the deeds done in the body." ¶ *Shall any.* That is, no force *external* to the Christian can ever drive him by compulsion into a reprobate state. But his *own will* may pluck him out of the hand of Christ, and our Lord does not here say any thing to the contrary. That which all Christians may agree in, is, that no power can ever compel the believer to his ruin. Rom. viii. 38, 39. Some will go beyond this to claim that he cannot by any possibility, in or out of himself, fall away from faith. The latter opinion is not here at least asserted. It is not necessary to be believed by us, and its prudence as a subject of discussion among Christians, is doubted by many pious and learned persons. A man is safe only while he perseveres in holiness, and all admit that he is safe so long as he does so.

29. *My Father.* See ch. vi. 37. Bear in mind that the question is—Art thou the Christ, and that Jesus appeared before them as a man, a prophet. He now gives renewed emphasis to His assertion by repeating it as guaranteed by God the Father, whom the Jews allowed to be *greater than all*, though they doubted the claim of Jesus. ¶ *No man is able.* Or rather, *no one* is able, whether it be man or devil. No external power of any sort or degree can destroy a Christian *against his own will.* But *his own will* may at any period of life cause him to fall from grace. Hence the frequent exhortations to all believers to persevere with fear and trembling, lest, after all the assurances of safety, they may quench the Spirit and become castaways. See Heb. vi 4–9. Nothing is said here of *perseverance* in grace, as the schools have it, for nothing here said at all touches the *inner will* of the believer and its powers. But the kind of perseverance which they, who are at last saved will have, is that persevering holiness in will and deed, which many now manifest in their lives, though they differ widely at present in their opinions.

30. *I and My Father are one.* The Greek reads *one* in the neuter; that is, *one thing* or *one substance.* Not, we are one *person*, but one *Being*, in substance and essence. That an important part of the doctrine of the Trinity is here

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not [a]written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

[a] Ps. 82. 6.

taught may appear, 1. From the plain sense of the words. They have no other *literal meaning*, and no figurative meaning which is at all consistent. It is pitiful to see to what shifts the deniers of the Catholic truth are put, to wrest this Scripture. 2. From the manner in which it was understood, as showing the intention of the speaker. It is either a true use, or it is *blasphemous*, to use such wordsof Christ. There is no middle ground, and we could not find an excuse that will stand scrutiny, if Jesus did not intend these words in their self-evident sense. For it was so easy to prevent the Jews from error, and the error was so terrible and disastrous, even leading them to a religious abhorrence of Him, that He must have explained away His words at once. The Jews plainly understood Him to make Himself God. 3. The Scripture would give us a terrible idea of God, if when it was given to lead men into all truth, it should on the contrary have convinced the whole Catholic Church for nineteen centuries, that the Father and Son are *One God*, if they are not such, but divided infinitely. 4. Christ promised that His Church should not be prevailed against by the powers of evil. But if He is *only man*, then the universal Church has been given up to the grossness of *idolatry*, in worshipping the creature as the Creator; and God by His providence has extinguished the few and feeble efforts to remove this opinion and practice, and has given prosperity in all things to those who have loved "to honor the Son even as they honor the Father." 5. This assertion in its plain sense is in perfect harmony with all Scripture, and has given spiritual life and power to the saints of all ages who have believed in it. The few who denied, have varied and altered their opinions, and otherwise manifested the little satisfaction which they had in them.

31. *Took up stones.* By their law they were bidden to punish blasphemers with stoning to death. Lev. xxiv. 14–16. They understood Him to *make Himself God*, and would not thus receive Him. ¶ *Again.* See ch. viii. 59.

32. *Many good works.* These good works were miracles of healing and mercy to the poor, preaching to them truth and other deeds, which should have moved their affections, and convinced their minds of the truth of His words. And our Lord refers them to these good works, with a design to win them, such at least among them as could still be moved by reason, to lay aside their harshness and judge more mildly and correctly. He calls them not works of miracle, but *good* works, for they had been done in love to them. How ungrateful then this cruel return.

33. *For blasphemy.* See Matt. ix. 3. ¶ *Makest Thyself God.* Before this they had understood Him to claim equality with God. See ch. v. 18. Now they suppose Him to claim to be another God or the Divine Being made flesh.

34. *In your law.* The whole Old Testament was sometimes called the Law, both because it began with the Pentateuch, as the first written and the most important portion of it, and because the whole Scripture was the inspired word of God, and therefore contained in all its parts the will of God to rule the life of man. It is here called *your* law, because it was revealed to

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the [a]word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

36 Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said I am the Son of God?

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father *is* in me, and I in him.

[a] Ro. 13. 1.

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the Jews alone, and was honored by those who were present as infallible. Compare chs. xii. 84; xv. 25. The passage here cited is found in the book of the Psalms. Ps. lxxxii. 6. ¶ *Ye are gods.* The Hebrew language admitted this use of the word to which our ideas are entirely foreign. For there is that distinction with us now between the One God and all creatures, that we cannot use the word in a good sense, of those who are commissioned or authorized by God, as the Jewish magistrates were. See Ex. vii. 1; xxii. 28.

35. *Unto whom the word of God came.* Those who were commissioned by God, such as magistrates and judges, even such as were unjust, whom David was warning in the psalm. All such were anointed by the Spirit of God for the purpose of governing, and that their judgments might be final God gave them high dignity in speaking of them. ¶ *Cannot be broken.* Is final in whatever language it uses, or whatever it declares. Therefore if the Old Testament, to whose very words the Jews paid the deepest reverence, made such a use of words, it was, by their own way of reasoning, right for Jesus to call Himself the Son of God, when He too had given conclusive proofs in miracles and sacred teachings that He was indeed sent by God. And He goes no farther than this at the time, because the Jews were then unprepared to receive the whole truth of His nature. He simply justifies His name of Son of God. He does not yet explain it, as He did to the disciples, who afterwards understood the whole meaning of His words.

36. *Sanctified.* Consecrated or set apart and fitted for this holy work. This was done, when the Holy Ghost overshadowed the mother of Jesus and prepared Him a body, and human soul, whereby to save the world by himself. ¶ *I am the Son of God.* "The law called those who were men gods; and if any man could bear the name religiously and without arrogance, surely that man could who was sanctified by the Father, in a sense in which none else is sanctified to the Sonship: as the blessed Paul saith, "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness." For all this reply refers to himself as man, the Son of God being also the Son of man."—*St. Hilary.*

37. *Works of my Father.* See ch. v. 17. Having set aside their charge of blasphemy, on such low grounds as they could comprehend, Jesus returns to the true argument of His nature—His equality of power with God. Works of my Father, are such works or powers as ye ascribe to God who is my Father; such works or powers do I His Son show you. And this equal power is that which argues me truly the Son of God. As there is one God, and yet as Christ did show the power of God, then is He "one with the Father," in the catholic sense.

38. *Believe the works.* See what they report to your reason. They show you a man who *can do all things,* who worketh hitherto with the most unlimited power; such a man must be received and believed when He claims the majesty which His power justified. ¶ *In me.* This phrase declares a union, the most intimate possible, in the cases in which it is used. Of Father and Son in the divine substance expresses oneness of nature. Of Christ and His disciples, it expresses that unity of heart

39 Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

CHAPTER XI.

NOW a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of [a]Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was *that* [b]Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

a Lu. 10. 38, 39. *b* Ch. 12. 3.

and spirit, which is explained by St. Paul in Ephesians. See Eph. iv. 4–6 and 15, 16.

39. *Again.* They had sought it before. ch. vii. 30, 44. Perhaps it means that they began again to try and apprehend Him in order to stone Him, as recurring to the former assertion of being One with God. See vs. 30, 31. ¶ *He escaped.* See ch. viii. 59.

40. *The place where, &c.* To Bethabara. See ch. i. 28. Jesus went thither for safety, as we see by the conversations of the following chapter. His presence in that place excites the comparison between Him and the great prophet John, who had then performed his mission.

41. *No miracle.* It was not his work, nor was it necessary for him. He came as a *prophet*, and showed the people the signs of the office; great holiness and strictness of life; power to utter truth and courage to do it boldly, and such eloquence as other prophets had shown before Him. And the common mass of the nation had accepted Him as such, and yet how strange the contrast. They refused One who showed sublimer powers than John and to whom John had specially warned them to attend.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *A certain man.* It has entered into the peculiar plan of this evangelist alone to record this miracle of the recalling to life of Lazarus: for he traces the immediate cause of the death of Jesus from it. See v. 50. St. John may probably have been acquainted with this decree of the Sanhedrim, as he was well known to the high priest. Ch. xviii. 15. But in any view it coincides with the more meditative temper of this disciple, that he should distinctly mark the very act which roused the rulers to a fatal resolution, and should show, in his telling of the circumstances of it, that Jesus foresaw that He should soon fill the place from which He was for a while recalling His friend Lazarus. This recall of Lazarus is sometimes improperly called a *resurrection.* The Scriptural resurrection is that final change of the body, when it *can die no more.* Lazarus again sleeps in hope of it. It is also noted that St. John probably wrote after the final death of Lazarus, and therefore recorded this act about which, consideration for him or his sisters had rendered the other evangelists silent. ¶ *Bethany.* See note, Matt. xxvi. 6. ¶ *The town of Mary.* The place where the brother and sisters lived. The sisters had greater honor than the brother, and they are named for the reason that they too had part in the love of Jesus for Lazarus.

2. *It was that Mary, &c.* See Matt. xxvi. 6. It was not the one spoken of by St. Luke, vii. 6.

3. *Whom thou lovest.* They send to Jesus, even as the Shunamite to Elisha. 2 Kings viii. 8–37. See 1 Kings xvii. 9 to end. They were among the intimate friends of Jesus, and had communicated to Him in hospitality, of their

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

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good things. Now they plead no merits of their own or their brothers, but only the love which Jesus had shown them. Friendships are as necessary among Christians, as are families. Religion does not interfere with social relations and particular affections, but purifies and exalts them. Jesus loved those who had mingled with Him in daily relations, as the disciples; him who had peculiar amiableness, as St John, and those who had spread for Him the hospitable board, as this family. We not only may, but must, as we are men, do likewise. Again the best of men may suffer. Here was one whom Jesus loved, but as a mortal he must be sick and in pain; his sisters grieving with anguish over his loss. For religion does not release us from chastisements, but gives us patience and hope in bearing them. ¶ *Sent unto Him.* For sympathy and help. They knew His power and loved Him as a prophet and friend. They who love Jesus in health and prosperity, may ever send their prayers as swift messengers in time of trouble, and find Him. He may gently try their faith for a little while, yet is ever ready to help them.

4. *Not unto death.* It will not be unto death, in the sense that, it will not be permanent, though for a time mortal. In our modern modes of speech, this form of expression would be easily misunderstood; but it was by no means unusual for the ancient prophets to adopt a form of speech which should for a time seem dubious, but would be only the more emphatic in the end. And Jesus had occasion for this parabolic form, in order to try the faith of His disciples, or to prevent the malice of His enemies. Lazarus died and the words seemed to fail; he returned to life, and it was evident that he was an exception to the common rule, and must die twice; that his disease was not, after all, unto death. ¶ *For the glory of God.* It will promote the glory of Him who has sent Me, when you see the end of this event. Jesus foresaw the issue, and leaves this record of His intention to restore Lazarus to life. It is the most remarkable miracle of those done by the Lord Jesus, and was also among the last. For the Jews could not gainsay it, nor doubt it. They therefore destroyed the doer of it.

6. *Abode two days.* Detained it may be by other business, or to leave no possible doubt of the miracle which he was to perform. For when He arrived Lazarus had been dead four days, and great numbers from the city had gathered to Bethany to comfort the sisters. Meanwhile they wonder and grieve that Jesus is away. So the Christian may mourn and wonder that his grief is not lifted from him at once, when the All-merciful is meditating a more glorious issue of it, than he dares to hope for! ¶ *Where He was.* Beyond Jordan, where He was in safety. It was about thirty miles from Bethany. It is likely that Lazarus was already dead, when the message reached Him, so that it was not a plea of faith to Him, such as the prayer of the nobleman of Capernaum. "Sir, come down ere my child die" (John iv. 49), but it was now simply a question of time, how soon he should recall His friend to life again.

8. *Of late.* See ch. x. 31.

9. *Twelve hours.* Is not the day a certain space of time which cannot be

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus [a]sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

[a] De. 31. 16; Dan. 12. 2; Ac. 7. 60; 1 Cor. 15. 18, 51.

diminished, when we may work trusting in the merciful care of God? Jesus knew beforehand His hour of death, and so could not fear the Jews, but He here uses an illustration which His disciples could appreciate. They believed Him to have a mission to be the Messiah. It was impossible then that He should be cut off, while in the path of duty, while His day of life lasted. The Jews divided day-light into twelve equal parts, longer in summer and shorter in winter. ¶ *In the day.* Of sunlight. A man going about or journeying in the day has less fear than at night, when he cannot avoid stumbling in the darkness. So Jesus would have His disciples understand that His own life and work was all plain before Him both in its dangers and safeguards. ¶ *Light of the world.* The sunlight, by which this world is illuminated. The words are purposely *general*, in order to apply both to the natural act of a man walking in the day in safety, and one going spiritually the way of God's commandments and having spiritual "*light in Him.*" And it is a skilful shadowing of the laws of the spiritual world by the phraseology of the material, when a figure thus leans equally on both senses.

10. *In the night.* A traveller by night, especially in such a rocky and hilly land as Judea, has evidence to this day of the dangers he incurs, of stumbling to his destruction over some precipice or into a ravine. The traveller who goes on in the darkness of unbelief, is liable to greater ruin, for he has no light of faith to guide him. ¶ *No light in him.* Is in the dark. This sense fills up the material picture, but the very strangeness of the words, sets us to look at its application. We do not say that a man has no sunlight in him, but the light in him is that light of reason illuminated by faith in God, of which Jesus speaks. Matt. vi. 22, 23. See Eph. v. 13. 14. This light of faith the disciples should have had, so as to have lost their fears.

11. *Our friend Lazarus.* He was well known to them all. He was a disciple. He belonged to that multitude, which did not go about with Jesus from place to place, as they had no call to do so. He, with his sisters had often entertained them and ministered to their wants, during their frequent visits to Jerusalem. ¶ *Sleepeth.* Is dead. The word sleep in all the ancient languages, was frequently used in place of death. For before Christ had brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, the burden of the curse weighed heavily on men's hearts, and they loved not to speak of death. So they said, *he sleeps*, for he is dead. See Deut. xxxi. 16; 2 Sam. vii. 12; Dan. xii. 2. And this use is continued in the New Testament, because death must end as a sleep in the resurrection, and meanwhile, the body seems to sleep in the grave, and the spirit though in rest and felicity is in a condition of imperfect happiness or misery, as compared with the state to be entered upon after the judgment. 1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thes. iv. 14.

12. *If he sleep, &c.* Sleep is the medicine of most diseases. The disciples urge every argument, to deter the Lord from making the journey into Judea. Why should He go and expose himself to danger, when Lazarus was recovering? They could credit the supernatural knowledge of Jesus, so far, as to

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, ‖ about fifteen furlongs off:)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

‖ Or, *about two miles.*

make no remark on the fact that He should know the state of the sick man at such a distance, yet could urge their own opinion upon Him, as to the expediency of going to him. They were affectionate but inconsistent.

15. *For your sakes.* It was expedient that they should witness the power of Jesus over those who were dead, before the terrible trial before them, of seeing Him expire upon the cross. If He had been present, He could not have resisted the entreaties of the sisters for his cure. And therefore in the leadings of Providence, the sisters had sent to Him, not a plea to "speak the word" and Lazarus should live, but simply to announce his sickness. And again the messenger came to Him, it seems, after the sick man had died. All things then conspired to bring about the great miracle, which should astonish and confirm His disciples then in part, afterwards more fully.

16. *Thomas, which is called Didymus.* The two names bear the same meaning, namely *a twin*, the one being Hebrew, the other Greek. ¶ *Die with Him.* "If He goes into Judea He must certainly die; let us then follow and acknowledge this desperate venture, and if it must come to this, die with Him." Death seems often easy, when in the distance, yet will freeze the courage nearer by. Thomas is put down as *slow to believe.* But this exclamation seems as full of affection and consistency, as of doubt. He does not consider as he should the power of Jesus and His mission as Messiah, which could sustain Him against all enemies whatever, but he urges now upon Him this sense of the desperateness of the journey as an affectionate entreaty to remain; no less strong for being implied.

17. *Grave.* Graves were mostly made by the Jews in the faces of rocky cliffs, or in chambers cut down into the rock, and covered at the entrance. It seems that Lazarus, according to prevailing usages with all persons of his rank had not been *embalmed.* Were they waiting for Jesus to come? ¶ *Four days.* "Our Lord had staid two days, and the messenger had come the day before; the very day on which Lazarus died. This brings us to the fourth day."—*St. Chrysostom.*

18. *Fifteen furlongs off.* Two miles. See note, Matt. xxi. 1. The village was so near Jerusalem, that very many of the citizens came out to comfort the mourners, and probably people of some mark, who necessarily beheld and afterwards published the miracle.

19. *To comfort.* The rites of mourning among the Jews were formal and generally observed. Three days were given to weeping, seven to visits of consolation from relatives and acquaintance, nor were the last offices finished under thirty days.

20. *Then Martha, &c.* It is probable that Martha partook in a measure of

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again [a]in the resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and [b]the life: [c]he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

a Lu. 14. 14; He. 11. 35. *b* Ch. 5. 21. *c* Ch. 6. 35. *d* 1 Jno. 5. 10, &c.

the fears of the disciples and went out to meet Jesus, as He drew near the place, before the Jews could know of His approach. She was the most practical of the two sisters, and to her the household seems to have been usually intrusted, though at this time of mourning such cares were not allowed. ¶ *Sat still.* In Greek, simply *was sitting.* She did not know of the approach of the Saviour, and perhaps was not of the energetic careful temper of her sister to have gone forth to meet Him alone. Different tempers are necessary in the organization of human beings, and Scripture honors and preserves this variety. Mary's grief filled her whole soul and was speechless: Martha's allowed a thought of the safety of her friend, and could reason. With the latter Jesus reasons—with the former, *weeps.*

21. *My brother had not died.* True: Jesus does not deny it. It is a gentle reproach. He does not in words explain why He allowed the death. Ponder this and then believe that afflictions sent from God work out our highest good as Christians, and be patient.

22. *Even now.* Late as it is, you may recall my brother's life. For this hope there were some grounds in the fact that the prayers of two prophets had effected such a miracle, and that Jesus had recalled two persons to life before this. She shows weakness and strength; weakness that she should think it necessary for Jesus to be present; strength, that she believed in His power with God.

23. *Rise again.* There is but one resurrection of the *body*, and that did not happen to Lazarus. His return to life was a faint foreshadowing of it. Our Lord speaks to Martha of that future life, and consoles her by the promise of the glory which awaited her brother, who was now in the grave, for her mind admitted of such comfort. And the act of recalling Lazarus was a pure free gift to an individual; the patient hope of the final resurrection must stay the fainting hearts of all believers. Jesus, therefore, first to one sister sets forth the faith which supports all, before He yields to the voiceless grief of the other.

24. *At the last day.* After the return of the Jews from Babylon, the doctrine of the resurrection in some sort of the body, though disputed by some of them, became the faith of the great body of the people. Martha confesses her belief in it, as if to imply that it did not check her grief, that it was not that she feared for her brother, but would have him back again in this life.

25. *I am the resurrection.* "Not that I am only a prophet as Elijah and Elisha, to pray during a season for this gift, but I am the all-powerful cause, author and medium of the resurrection, and can of my own will effect it. Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 20, 21; 2 Kings iv. 33, 34. Jesus declares Himself *the* resurrection, putting the effect for the causes of it, all of which sprung from Him. Phil. iii. 21. ¶ *And the life.* See ch. i. 4. As He gives life, animal and spiritual to all men, then could He at once recall the dead, and sustain the living, could comfort Martha, and yet could give the Church a precious text, to hush the sobs of myriad funerals, with the potent words of consolation. ¶ *Though he were dead.* There are two classes regarded in this verse, those who were then dead before and

26 And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

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those after the coming of Christ. See Rev. xiv. 13; Heb. x. 39, 40, where this distinction is also evident. All believers whether under the old or the new covenant, are therefore safe in the powerful keeping of Christ.

26. *Whosoever liveth.* All those who are now alive in the Christian covenant, are admitted to higher privileges, and receive the indwelling of the Spirit in its fulness, and the life eternal, of which He had discoursed, John vi. 51, 54, 56, 63, and are sustained by "a better covenant established upon better promises. ¶ *Never die.* Shall not die by the death which had reigned till His time, but which would reign no longer, since He had brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Christians die, but in hope and faith of the promises, so that gentler names belong to their change. ¶ *Believest thou this?* "The faith is more precious than the act of recalling Lazarus. For he must die again, and the faith of My words will save you from eternal death." This act of grace was done as to *believers*, and hence the faith of Martha is first established, that she may not, in wonder at the miracle, forget its spiritual meaning.

27. *Yea, Lord, &c.* One thing is asked, another answered. For the deeper mysteries of the Gospel were not understood till the Holy Ghost was sent down to reveal them to the Church. Martha as far as she comprehends believes, and where she cannot fathom, she trusts. Believing that Jesus was the Christ, she took refuge in that confession, and implied that she received His declarations as true. She, a woman, and in trouble, had learned that trust which the disciples were yet slow in receiving. Matt. xvi. 16.

28. *Went her way.* Being sent back to call her sister. ¶ *Secretly.* From this we may infer that she sympathized somewhat in the fears of the disciples, and again felt a respect for the civilities of life, as the Jews had passed laws against Jesus, and any who confessed Him. Ch. ix. 22. She knew that the two parties were arrayed in opposition, and therefore spake to her sister in a lowered voice. ¶ *The Master* Thus they called Christ, as confessing themselves to be His disciples. It is equivalent to our word *teacher*, and used of an instructor in religion. There were disciples of Christ who were allowed to remain in their homes and usual duties as pious Jews, during His lifetime.

31. *Followed her.* They might not have done this, if they had known to whom she was going. For there were persons in the number hostile to Jesus. Ver. 46. Their going was important both as hostile witnesses, who could not be deceived, and as the bearers of this news to the Jewish magistrates. ¶ *To the grave.* The accompanying cut of the entrance to the tomb of the kings, near Jerusalem, may give an idea of the mode of burial among the Jews. Their sepulchres were mostly vaults with

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and ‖was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 [a]Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the

‖ Gr. *He troubled Himself.*

a Lu. 19. 41.

one or more chambers hewed out of the

Tomb of the Kings.

rocks, and closed by large stones rolled against the entrances.

33. *He groaned in the spirit.* Manifested by groans the anguish of His spirit. He makes no reply to Mary, who had addressed to Him the same words as Martha, but moved by sympathy with her who, speaking, bowed at His feet to express her love and trust in Him, was Himself overwhelmed with tenderness. Jesus also was agitated by superhuman emotions as He saw the numberless members of the human race suffering by death, the wages of their sins, now to be rescued by His own death which was hastening on. ¶ *Was troubled.* Was agitated. His features manifested grief and sympathy.

34. *Where have ye laid him?* He did not manifest His own knowledge of the spot, but called on them to lead Him thither, that the evil-minded Jews who were present might have no cause to suspect any fraud. He had come from a distance, had not visited the tomb, and spake as a man, and as they would expect Him to speak.

35. *Jesus wept.* Lo! a true emotion of a human soul: about to show proof of His Divine power, He first shows Himself a man like unto us! Why did He weep? Not solely for Lazarus, whom He knew to be safe in the state of his sleep; not solely for sympathy with the grief which He was about to relieve. The same sorrow over departed friends must continue for all ages. But with these feelings there mingled the certainty of His own bitter death, the picture of the unbelieving Jews, a fallen race, hastening on to a death which has no end, and all that first moved Him to pity man, and come down to this world to save Him. He was no Stoic, to condemn sorrow, nor to set a tearless example. He wept over a grave, and again over a reprobate city. And we learn, that natural grief at the loss of friends is permitted to the best Christians. We learn that we have to do with a merciful High Priest, who is tender and compassionate towards those who mourn over sin.

38. *A cave.* A common kind of sepulchre. Matt. viii. 28. ¶ *A stone lay upon it.* On it or against it, accord-

grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me:

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by, I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

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ing as the mouth was horizontal or upright. See Matt. xxvii. 60.

39. *Four days.* This fact St. John mentions, that there may be no doubt of the fact of the death of Lazarus. There may be cases of trance when a body appears to be lifeless for a while, and then breathes again, but there can be no such circumstance imagined here, save in the invincible unbelief of some modern German neologist. "Thus every thing tends to stop the mouths of the unbelieving. Their hands take away the stone, their ears hear Christ's voice, their eyes see Lazarus come forth, they perceive the smell of the dead body."—*St. Chrysostom.*

40. *The glory of God.* "Thou shouldest see a wonderful deed which would manifest the glorious power of God residing in Me." This promise was implied in the declaration of v. 25, for Jesus being the resurrection and the life, could bestow life on Lazarus, and would do so from love to him and his family. The glory of God is seen in His closng mercy. It now dwells in the Church, which, animated by Christ's presence, carries the blessed Gospel to all men, and awakes them from the death of sin.

41. *Lifted up His eyes.* The position of prayer to God the Father. Our Lord was able of Himself to raise the dead. Now He communes with God before the act, that the bystanders may see that He derives His power from heaven, and prevent their objection, that He wrought by any magic art. ¶ *Thou hast heard me.* He had prayed before, for He foreknew this scene. It was an important, a critical moment. About it were thronging the vital considerations of the death of Christ, and the redemption of men.

42. *I know.* By that faith which He had in common with us as man, as well as by His Divine knowledge, for the word *know* is used often for unhesitating confidence in truth. But here Jesus speaks the words of a man, that the people around might see in all things simple natural actions, and be able to comprehend that He wrought the miracle by the power of God. ¶ *Thou hast sent me.* That I am the Son of God, to which these words are equivalent. If the Jews had believed that one proposition, they would have received all His works as divine, all His words as infallible truth.

43. *A loud voice.* With such a voice as a man would use, in calling one up out of a deep sleep, and that His own power might appear in the act. He used no whispering nor mutter, as did the magicians. He spoke that all around should hear Him. And He represented in this call that future resurrection, when "Christ will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. iv. 16), and "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." John v. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 52.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

¶ *Lazarus, come forth.* He spake this of His own power, and in a style which no other prophet or good man has ever used. For He alone had power in Himself, and could speak as the Omnipotent *Word*, to new create, even as before He had created the world, and all that is in it. "This is His general way. His words show humility, His acts power." He shows us in symbol the final resurrection, when, unlike Lazarus who came back to this mortal life again to lie in the grave, we with him will put on the incorruptible, glorious spiritual body. Then His voice will be raised, and all will hear it and come forth, "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. xii. 2.

44. *He that was dead.* The very same man, not only alive, but in his health and strength. For this was a double miracle. The return of life did not imply the renewed strength, but this strength was a superadded gift. ¶ *Bound hand and foot.* He may have been swathed in grave clothes in such a manner as to be able to walk; but from the whole style it seems better to suppose that this was an additional wonder in the case, which should have its use either then or afterwards. For then the others must unloose him and would know that he was no phantom, since we cannot doubt the truth of facts when the wonderful and the natural meet so harmoniously. It was the custom of the Jews to wrap their dead in linen and spices (see John xix. 40) in such a manner as to prevent any use of the limbs, which fact, the words, "bound hand and foot," evidently prove to have been done in this case. ¶ *A napkin.* A linen cloth covering the whole face, so that sight was out of the question. The Jews used no coffins as we do, and therefore covered the body with cloths in every part. The voice which resuscitated Lazarus gives him supernatural strength, to hasten from the cold tomb to the side of his Lord and Saviour. Then the supernatural gives way to the common means. ¶ *Loose him.* The bystanders were perhaps amazed. To give them time to recover, and make them recognize every portion of the miracle, Jesus orders them to loose the bandages and linen cloth from him, and suffer him to walk by the natural use of his limbs. In doing this they must handle him and feel him, "and know that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as they see him have." Luke xxiv. 39. Thus they would gradually lose their fear, and be convinced of the reality of his resurrection. All were persuaded. Some believed in Jesus. Others believe the fact, but burn with bitterer hate. The crowds who afterwards came to see Lazarus believed the miracles, so that the rulers were forced to hasten their hostile measures against the Saviour, who had given this reason for all men to believe on Him.

46. *Some of them.* Of the Jews from the city. They also believed and yet were the more hostile. Our Lord has once said, "if they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though *one rose from the dead.*" Here we see the comment upon it. The Gospel is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, according as we use those faculties, with which a merciful God has endowed us. The facts of this miracle are in our hands; some will believe, others wrest their reason and understanding to ingenious and fatal skepticism.

47. *A council.* A session of the great

47 ¶ [a]Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation.

a Ps. 2. 2; Mat. 26. 3.

49 And one of them, *named* [b]Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

b Lu. 3. 2; Ac. 4. 6.

Sanhedrim, see Matt. ii. 4. ¶ *What do we?* The question of men who are astonished at the energy of those, to whom they are opposed. "What are we about! The one whom we had tried to stone, had driven away from Jerusalem to the wilds of Bethabara, whom we were despising, thus, by one act, threatens to overturn our power and change all things." We are apt to imagine the Pharisees as foolish and mad in their ways. But if they doubted the claim of Jesus to be the Christ, which they obstinately and wickedly forced themselves to doubt, then their other acts were reasonable and consistent. It was time for them to be up and doing. Their sins lay behind this, in refusing to believe what was so fully proved. ¶ *Miracles.* They His enemies admit this fact, and their conduct proves the same. For only because of His miracles did they fear Him. But for these they might have adopted the plan commended by Gamaliel afterwards. Acts v. 38, 39. Truth without power seldom excites the fears of the rulers of this wicked world.

48. *All men.* All the Jews. ¶ *The Romans shall come.* Shall come in greater power and take away all the privileges which we now enjoy. Though they were tributaries then to the Romans, yet their yoke was very light as yet; they feared that it would be made heavier, as it indeed happened. The ground of their plea was either, 1. That they supposed that Jesus wished to make Himself *a king*, which would be open hostility to the Roman Emperor, and followed by other wars: or 2. That, He would lead the people astray, and change the national customs, and so forfeit that providence of Jehovah, which was promised to them in the law. And on both grounds there was reason for fear, since in both ways their national existence was afterwards brought to an end. ¶ *Our place.* Our holy land, city and temple. They remembered the former leading into Babylonish captivity, which was the result of intestine commotions and wandering of heart from the Lord Jehovah. ¶ *Nation.* Our national existence. This was afterwards done.

49. *Caiaphas.* See note Luke iii. 2. ¶ *Being high priest that same year.* This office was at first for life, but in the course of time it became venal and was changed at the pleasure of the heathen ruler for the time. The Romans made it for the most part annual. Caiaphas held the office about ten years. ¶ *Ye know nothing at all.* "Ye are very unwise and dilatory, as those who are entirely ignorant The war is with one man, the way is very plain, how to proceed." This is the counsel of a man as bold as he was bad; yet bold and bad as he was, he was blindly executing the will of God, and, like Balaam before him, became, by virtue of his office, a true prophet for the time. Many in the council feared Jesus and some believed on Him. The advice of Caiaphas was a cunning stroke to put down all such.

50. *It is expedient for us.* It is the only way for us to escape from this dilemma, and prevent these consequences mentioned above. ¶ *Die for the people.* Die for their safety, even as the goat of sacrifice dies in his kind for their sins. But it was a cruel, wicked speech. For Jesus was innocent and a benefactor, a teacher of truth and a

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 And [a]not for that nation only, but that also he should [b]gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called [c]Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

a Is. 49. 6; 1 Jno. 2. 2. *b* Ch. 10. 16; Eph. 2. 14, &c.

c 2 Chron. 13. 19.

worker of good deeds. God was not pleased with human victims, and hated unjust counsels. But what thought the high priest of this? He would rid himself of an enemy. Yet he softens his words, and while seeking to veil his cruel design in a plausible form, he actually moulds it into the form of a true prophecy. For it was *expedient*, nay the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge of God, that "one man should die then for the sins of all people." Acts ii. 23.

51. *Not of himself.* This, says the Apostle, was not *his* meaning, but only a mask to his cruelty and hate, but he actually gave an official edict which was a true prophecy. It was God who overruled his wrath, and even at its height made it praise Him. And that the man Caiaphas could mean one thing, and that wickedness, and the officer, by the power of God, give force to a true prophecy, is in keeping with our knowledge of such relations. ¶ *Being high priest.* By virtue of his office, he may be said to have registered it as the decree of the solemn council against Jesus, that He was "to die for the sins of the people." Hence all other charges afterwards brought in, would not change this; but the Jews would be obliged to admit that this sentence with all its consequences stood firm, that Jesus died for the sins of the people, a true Lamb of God, chosen by the High Priest as a Sacrifice unto God. That a bad man may give true prophecy was never doubted by the Jews. See the story of Balaam, Numb. xxii.; xxiii.; 2 Pet. ii. 15. ¶ *He prophesied.* Prophets spake as they were moved by the Spirit of God. And often without their own consent the Spirit seized and hurried them on, sometimes against it. Their acts at times were prophetic. And especially the rites and ordinances of the Jews were continually opening up some future event of the Messianic covenant. So that the Jew used the word *prophecy* in an enlarged sense, of whatever was uttered in circumstances or by persons plainly directed by the providence of God, which afterwards squared with the events. Says the learned Lightfoot: "In these words we observe him speaking as a Caiaphas and as a prophet. As a wretched Caiaphas, counselling the Sanhedrim not to fear or hesitate at the business, but at once to resolve on it; and as a prophet, signifying it was necessary that Christ should die, for the preservation of that nation and the whole world."

52. *In one.* Into one body, the new covenant in the Church universal. ¶ *The children of God.* All those who were thereafter to become believers and followers of Christ. He says not who shall be, but as an Apostle hoping to see the Gospel carried to all the world, he speaks of them as if they were already children. All who serve God in truth and sincerity are to be at last gathered into one common fold of salvation.

53. *That day forth.* This occurred but a few months before the crucifixion, so that their malice was soon gratified. The death of Jesus followed on this miracle of Lazarus, which was too public, too plain and overwhelming in its proofs to be gainsayed or denied.

54. *No more openly.* He retired from public view until He should be

55 ¶ And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew *it*, that they might take him.

CHAPTER XII.

Saturday, March 20.

THEN Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

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compelled by the law to go up to Jerusalem to keep the Passover. He spent this time in solitude, for His work was nearly done, and now after one bitter trial, for which He would fain prepare His spirit, it would be finished. ¶ *A city called Ephraim.* A small town situated in a remote place. It was in the mountainous country near the thinly peopled portion of Judea, on the edge of the region belonging to the tribe of Benjamin.

55. *The Jews' Passover.* As St. John was writing this book for the Gentile world, he gives it this name, the Passover of the Jews. See note, Matt. xxvi. 2–17. It was the fourth and last of our Saviour's ministry, which had now continued three years and a half. ¶ *Purify themselves.* The legal purifications, which were strict (Lev. xvii. 6, 7; 2 Chron. xxx. 17, 18), had been added to alike by the piety and superstition of the ages after, so that it was necessary for many to be present in the temple some days before this holy feast. And the Jews were compelled to mix so frequently with the heathen, among whom they lived, that more numerous cases of legal or Pharisaic impurity would occur. These were to be expiated before they could eat the sacred feast. We see one of these rites practised by St. Paul on a certain occasion. Acts xxi. 24–26. Those who sinned in such a way as to require a sacrifice, and also Nazarites, presented themselves in the temple at the great feasts for this purpose.

56. *Among themselves.* There were two parties, the people and the rulers. The former sought after Jesus with various motives, but mostly friendly to Him. The others gave strict orders that no one should conceal Him, for they knew that He would be present, to pay His worship at the temple. The people would know of each other. Will He come? The cunning and malicious rulers doubt it not, but prepare to meet Him. Meanwhile the Saviour and His disciples are holding back until the due hour shall strike for a world's redemption. Then shall this fickle nation first hail Him in triumph, the conqueror of the grave of Lazarus, and again cry in madness, Crucify Him.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *Six days before the Passover. Saturday,* six days before the Paschal feast. Bethany was two miles from the city. Jesus entered it the following day, now called, in honor of it, Palm Sunday.

2–8. See Matt. xxvi, 6–13. This incident is probably distinct from that which is related by St. Matthew. This was six days before the Passover, in the house of Lazarus, and was a pouring of oil upon the feet of Jesus. That was two days before the Pascal, in the house of Simon the leper, and an anointing of the head of Jesus. The

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

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event recorded by St. Luke was of another woman altogether. Lu. vii. 36. ¶ *Martha served.* Busy and anxious to welcome her Lord, as was her wont. Luke x. 40. It was not customary for women to recline at the table in such feasts as this, in the presence of men. ¶ *Lazarus.* He was still an object of attention on account of his return to this life. This is the last we read of him. He died once more, and like all other Christians must rest in hope of the final resurrection.

3. *The feet of Jesus.* After a long journey on foot this was peculiarly refreshing, to relieve the parched and weary feet. She takes this way of showing her love, and tenderly chafes them with her hands, wiping them clean again with her hair. Four days after, in the house of Simon the leper she anoints the head of the Saviour in like manner.

4. *Three hundred pence.* About forty dollars. He is not alone in trying to be economical toward God, from fanciful theories about the poor.

6. *Not that he cared, &c.* This was written after the treachery of Judas had revealed his true character to the other disciples. Before that they supposed him a good, pious man like the rest, somewhat anxious perhaps for the little matters of the common stock, but doubtless a man of soft words and plausible speech. ¶ *Had the bag.* Had the scrip or bag into which the money, alms, and provisions of the party were put. That the disciples had certain provision in common, appears probable from this and other circumstances, while some of them had their own homes and nets to which they might turn. Judas, till covetousness destroys him, is the prudent business man, and handles the money of the party. Business and cares of property have often since run into a similar avarice. ¶ *Bare what was put therein.* He carried it about, and acted as treasurer and almoner. It does not mean that he stole any portion of it. He shows no such character. When four days later the same act was done, the rest of the disciples raise the same murmur. We may learn from this the danger of avarice, arising gradually from love of acquiring property, and again we should mark this fact, that the worst men are sometimes seen aping virtue so carefully as to deceive themselves and others as to their real state of heart.

10. *Lazarus also.* For while he so firmly and affectionately confessed Jesus and followed Him with honor, it was impossible for the wicked rulers to deny the miracle. How easy it is for unbelief to become unjust and cruel. Lazarus was a pious Jew. He did nothing worthy of death. But returning from the grave he became a spectre to the rulers, to be driven back to the sepulchre again at all hazards.

10 ¶ But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 ¶ On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, [a]Hosanna; Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 [b]Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him, when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 ¶ And there were certain [c]Greeks among them, [d]that came up to worship at the feast.

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Beth-

a Ps. 118. 25, 26. *b* Zech. 9. 9. *c* Ac. 17. 4. *d* 1 Ki. 8. 41, 42; Ac. 8. 26.

12–19. See notes, Matt. xxi. 1–16; Mark xi. 1–11; Luke xix. 29–44.

16. *These things, &c.* This shout of the Hosanna, and coming from the east to Jerusalem on an ass's colt, in fulfilment of the noble prophecies of Zechariah. St. John carefully notes the great change into the *Christian Covenant* at the day of Pentecost. He notes circumstances like this, which could be spiritually discerned only after they were enlightened by the Spirit. See ch. ii. 22. He marks the order of these events, "for the Holy Ghost was *not yet given: because* that Jesus was not yet glorified." And he records the minute instructions of Jesus concerning the Comforter, ch. xiv. 16–26, and xvi. 7–13, "which should teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." It is this gift of the Holy Ghost which marks the New Covenant as spiritual. Eph. iv. 8.

17. *Bare record.* Testified freely that they had seen Lazarus raised to life.

20. *Certain Greeks.* The Greek word is *Hellenists.* It may mean either heathen Greeks, or Proselytes, or Jews speaking that language. These persons seem to have been Gentiles, as our Saviour's discourse proceeds upon the subject of the salvation of the Gentiles, to have been acquaintances of Philip of Bethsaida, so probably from the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon, and to have been devout persons coming to Jerusalem to worship the one God of all, and with some imperfect ideas of Christ.

21. *Bethsaida in Galilee.* See note, ch. i. 44. This fact probably marks the character of the inquirers to be Syrophenicians. ¶ *Would see Jesus.* It is our pious desire to see this Prophet of whom we hear every one speaking. The city was at this time in unexampled commotion concerning the Lord Jesus. Even the Gentiles who came

saida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 ¶ And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a [a]corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, [b]there shall also my servant be:

a 1 Cor. 15. 36.

b Ch. 14. 3; 1 Thes. 4. 17.

thither to worship in the outer court of the Temple, in such services as were allowed them, sympathized in the general excitement. They desire to speak with Jesus. But the time for their conversion to the one fold, has not yet come, and our Lord discourses to His followers, perhaps in their hearing, of the events coming soon to pass.

22. *Telleth Andrew.* Jesus had once forbidden His disciples to go into the coasts of the Gentiles (Matt. x. 5), wherefore Philip seems to hesitate and tell Andrew, as it were to have his advice, or to suffer him to take the responsibility of introducing the uncircumcised strangers.

23. *Answered them.* Not by a simple yes or no, but in such general terms as should teach them the position of the Gentiles towards Him, after the Spirit had enlightened their minds. "Do these Gentiles wish to see me? The time of my crucifixion is coming, and of the calling of the nations; then they can see me by faith—meanwhile they who would be accepted let them be faithful in their service." ¶ *Hour is come.* The critical time has come, big with the events of which I have forewarned you so often. Jesus had often spoken of *His hour*, as not come, or at hand. Ch. ii. 4; iv. 21; vii. 30. ¶ *Son of man.* The Messiah. As Son of man, He belongeth not to Jews alone, but to Greeks and all others, and this name Son of man implies His taking the nature of all men upon Him. ¶ *Be glorified.* Be honored, not only by the Jews but by all men.

24. *Verily, verily.* This expression was intended to call their attention to a fact which must come before His glory, the—cross. They would think only of the glorifying, but after a worldly manner. Jesus recalls their thoughts to His death, but yet hidden under metaphorical words for wise reasons, as we can now discover. It was left for the wise hearer to make the application then (which few or none did); and for those who came after to see clearly that the death of Christ was foreordained from the beginning. As the grain of wheat must die in the process of germination in the earth, to give place to the blade and then other more numerous grains springing from it; so the body of Christ is the seed of the Church, which would beget numerous converts among the Gentiles. Compare 1 Cor. xv. 36–38, and 42–45. ¶ *Abideth alone.* Has no increase and becomes useless. So Christ took a body not for one human life, but that, bearing the sins of the whole world upon the cross, He might become "a quickening Spirit" to all believers.

25. *He that loveth, &c.* That is, loveth it more than Christ and truth. In one sense all should cherish life as the gift of God. But none may prefer their own life to the cause of goodness and truth. "As you see Me laying down my life for others, so must you be willing to follow Me in the same path, and lay down your lives for the brethren." ¶ *Hateth it.* When Christ is concerned, makes as light of losing it, as one does of that which he hates. See Matt. x. 39; Luke ix. 24.

if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, 'I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.

a Matt. 3. 17.

26. *Serve Me.* This seems to contain the answer to the Greeks who had applied to Him. "I am not to be served by numbers, and am in no need of the bodies of men, but if any one "would see Me" to any purpose, he must adopt this service, by a self-denial even at the hazard of life." ¶ *Follow Me.* Take example of and imitate Me. Many would have followed to temporal glory. Here and there one follows in the narrow path of humble obedience. ¶ *Where I am.* As God He was in heaven, whither as man He was soon to go. His followers must seek Him there, and be safe in being there approved by Him. The present is here used, because our Lord was always with the Father in His divine nature.

27. *Troubled.* It was not exalted with the pride which the shouts of Hosanna would have kindled in a carnal mind. There was a danger that day, that men, even the disciples, would be carried away with the noise of the fickle crowd, and be more than ever convinced that Jesus was about to become king of the Jews. He therefore suffers them to see the bitter waves of trouble, which were already reaching His soul, at the coming horrors of the cross. His human soul was borne down to the grave with agony inconceivable, by the mysteries of the redemption of a world of sinners. ¶ *What shall I say?* An expression as of one perplexed in bitterest distress. He doubted not the wisdom and mercy of God for an instant, but cries out as it were, before the woes to come. Sensibility to suffering is not only a part of our common nature, but necessarily increases as that nature becomes purer. In the sinless One it was beyond comparison lively and susceptible. ¶ *Father save Me.* This may be read as a question. "Shall I say, Father save me?" It is well though as it stands, and the answer to the question is implied, "I shall say, or *pray*, Father save me," &c. And then, when the utterance of grief in this ejaculation of prayer has relieved His burdened heart, He says as in the garden, "Thy will be done." For this very thing have I come to this trial. ¶ *This hour.* This time of trial and death. ¶ *For this cause.* No one can read the Gospels and not see that from the salutations of John the Baptist to Him, to the last hour of His life, Jesus ever goes forward with this one purpose of dying for the sins of the world in His mind. John calls Him the Lamb of God, to be slain for sin. He foretells this death in every possible way. And without believing this doctrine of atonement, there is no possibility of reading the Gospels with any consistent idea of their teachings.

28. *Glorify Thy name.* "I submit to Thy will, and will bear the burden. Only make Thy name glorious in My sufferings." The *name* of God is put in Scripture for all that we know of Him, His attributes, covenants, wisdom, &c. Thus does Jesus set the glory of God before Him, as His first and chiefest desire, and submits entirely to His will. ¶ *Voice from heaven.* Answering at once. It was as loud as the thunder, but in plain words, which were heard by all. The veracity of the writers of the Gospels is clearly shown in this simplicity; that they never turn aside from their discourse to narrate the manner of the merely wonderful. A classic writer would have spent a page in the minute description of such a voice and conjectures of its causes. St. John put it in less than a line. ¶ *I have both glorified it.* God had made the truth of His promises and wisdom glorious in the life of Christ, in His sinlessness, sacred teachings, supernatural works of mercy and divine revelation. This His public

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the [a] prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will [b] draw all *men* unto me.

a Mat. 12. 29; Ac. 26. 18; 2 Cor. 4. 4; Eph. 2. 2. *b* Ro. 5. 18; He. 2. 9.

work had now lasted three years and a half. ¶ *Will glorify it again.* This He did in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and the gathering of the Church, in which His mercy and truth meet together in all generations. Eph. 10. 20, 21; Phil. ii. 9, 10.

29. *It thundered.* Some of those who were standing by, affected variously by this unexpected reply, utter this exclamation. For their saying this does not deny that it was like the thunderings of Sinai, with a voice. But some amazed, some wishing to express that this was a reply suited to their ideas (especially those of them who were pagans), and some perhaps in their indomitable pride, say at once it thunders. ¶ *An angel spake.* God spake, as the Jews believed, only by angels. See Heb. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 19.

30. *Not because of Me.* It was not to strengthen His faith and trust in God, which was perfect. Terrible as was the certainty of death, He knew that it was for the glory of God, in the salvation of a world. ¶ *For your sakes.* That they might know assuredly that God approved of His teachings. This voice was a strong proof to the bystanders that Jesus was sent by God. They had been taught, that such a voice spake the words of their law to the hosts of their fathers, who were gathered around Mount Sinai. Though deceivers may juggle with our senses in many trifling things, no one can command the thunders of heaven at his will.

31. *Now is the judgment of this world.* Now is the great revelation about to be completed, in which the last and best covenant of grace shall be made with mankind and the evil maxims and laws of the world and its ignorance and vain philosophies be condemned. He does not speak of the final judgment, which is even yet future, but of His then present conquest over sin and death, by which the kingdom of Satan would be destroyed. The world at large was in covenant with the Creator, only by the natural law, which had been written in the conscience. The Jews were living under an imperfect covenant, which Apostles have not hesitated to term worldly, as opposed to the perfect and spiritual covenant. And as St. Paul said at Athens, "the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now calleth all men every where to repent." When the full revelation was finished, then all were without excuse, who refused obedience. Their old excuses were taken away, their "refuges of lies" destroyed, sin was condemned and the gate of heaven laid open before all men. This was the judgment, or condemnation of the world. ¶ *Prince of this world.* The devil, who was till then triumphant. Christ by His death "led captivity captive," "destroyed through death him that had the power of death, and spoiled principalities openly." Henceforward the power of Satan was to be narrowed, and they who had been in fear of his bondage, were to be set free by the superior power of the Spirit of truth. ¶ *Be cast out.* Be rejected as a monarch, who is despoiled and banished. The covenant of Christ was to be free to all, and over the faithful receivers of it, Satan should have little or no power. "Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4); so that if we now yield to sin, it must be to our greater shame and loss. See 1 John iii. 8–10.

32. *Be lifted up.* Be exalted, whether on the cross as a malefactor, or to

33 (This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, We have heard [a]out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you.[b] Walk while ye have

a Ps. 89. 36, 37; & 110. 4; Is. 9. 7; & 53. 8; Ezek. 37. 25; Da. 2. 44; & 7. 14, 27; Mic. 4. 7. *b* Jer. 13. 16; Eph. 5. 8.

heaven as a king. He veils under a metaphor the kind of death which He was to suffer, that His enemies might not have excuse, that they were fulfilling His own words. See chs. iii. 14; viii. 28. ¶ *Will draw.* Ch. vi. 44.

33. *What death.* As the Apostle discovered afterwards, though he did not know it at the time.

34. *The law.* The Old Testament, sometimes so called. See ch. x. 34. ¶ *Abideth for ever.* They meant abideth on this earth as a temporal king. The visions of the prophets had revealed the spiritual reign of the Messiah, as enduring for ever, in the sublimest expressions of their language. This reign, the Jews had interpreted only in a literal or carnal sense. But had they given all of their Scriptures the same careful study, other revelations in them would have corrected this error, and shown them, that Christ would reign in heaven and in the hearts of His people, not in the carnal pleasures of this lower earth, which is itself to be done away. ¶ *Who is this Son of man?* If you are not to abide for ever, and so in our ideas of the Messiah are not according to the Scriptures, who art thou? For the Son of man, as we read in Daniel, "is our Messiah." See Dan. vii. 13, 14. There was as much of perversity as ignorance in this question. They knew that Jesus had spoken of Himself.

35. *The light with you.* "Am I with you, to instruct you, in your own Scriptures, as in all the will of God." Our

the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the [c]children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37 ¶ But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

c 1 Thes. 5. 5; 1 Jno. 2. 9.

Lord gave no place to captious hearers, but justly and firmly warned them, to use the light which they had, while it was "called to-day." He who will not be a Christian, till every question is fully settled, which a carnal, perverse incredulity can raise, is already doomed to fall. God gives us light to walk and work: many things are strange in our walking and working, but while we act in faith the marvel ceases. See ch. i. 4. ¶ *Lest darkness, &c.* Lest the instructions of the Gospel be taken from you. They who reject moral light, which is meant to guide the conscience in duties, lose it. This happened to Jerusalem. The Jews after rejecting a Saviour were at last given up to work all wickedness, and were fearfully punished for their sins by their desperate, reprobate superstitions. ¶ *For he, &c.* See ch. xi. 10.

36. *Believe in the light.* "Trust the facts which are indisputable, and obey the truth in righteousness." It is thus that He explains the previous command to *walk.* ¶ *Children of light.* As light is the opposite of darkness and the greatest of our natural blessings, so is it used to represent that spiritual state of acceptance with God, which is our salvation. To be children of light is to love God and believe in Him, thus becoming His children. This language was very dear to St. John, who uses it frequently in his writings, 1 John ii. 8–10.

37. *So many miracles.* So many in all His ministry. Many of the works of Christ were done in Jerusalem. In

38 That [a]the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He [b] hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

a Is. 53. 1; Ro. 10. 16.

b Is. 6. 9. 10.

spite of them all, especally in spite of that miracle of raising Lazarus from the tomb, which was then first in the minds of all men, the Jews refused their king. Miracles cannot save the heart from unbelief, where grace is wanting. ¶ *They believed not.* They, the nation of the Jews. St. John gives this as a note by the way. It marks his veracity, for it shows that the miracles of the Gospel may build up, not create faith. No impostor would have imagined that any nation of men could have resisted the conviction of so many miracles.

38. *The saying.* This passage of Isaiah, which was as familiar to them as a household word. See Is. liii. 1. ¶ *Be fulfilled.* Be again made true, as it had been in the time of the prophet. It was a prophecy, though put by Isaiah in the form of a complaint. See note, Matt. i. 22. ¶ *Our report.* Our message from the Lord. The answer is implied, "Few or none have listened to us." ¶ *The arm of the Lord.* A figurative expression, for *a mighty deliverance.* As a man stretches out his arm to save another, or to fight for him, or to guide him and support him, so is the Lord represented in such language, as rescuing, guiding and sustaining His people and destroying their enemies. *An outstretched arm*, seems a prophetic symbol, of a great deliverance from danger. Deut. xxvi. 8. ¶ *Revealed.* Made known. Deliverance coming from God generally implies obedience from man, and they who obeyed His message sent by the prophets, were able to see by faith His mercy. There are many richest mercies shown to us, which we must have a lively faith to see and improve.

39. *They could not.* "They could not because they would not." There was no natural obstacle to prevent any man who desired it, from having faith, but their own wicked hearts had so set them against the truth, that they had reached a state where their perversity acted like a natural bar. A drunken man cannot repent, but he may become sober and do it. And hearts gross, and eyes heavy with sin, represent such a moral stupor, as is incompatible with reason or repentance. That men should ever become so debased as to fail of faith in God, is not the fault of the mercy of God, which is for ever free to all who fulfil its conditions, but is their own folly, and to their own loss. ¶ *Said again.* Is. vi. 9, 10. Not that this happened because Isaiah used such words, but this was the true cause of the *could not*, which the prophet so clearly expressed of his own contemporaries.

40. *He hath blinded, &c.* He hath permitted this cause to operate. The words of Isaiah are somewhat different. "Go make the heart of this people fat," &c. And again St. Matthew varies it. "For this people's heart is hardened," &c. Matt. xiii. 15. And each expression contains a vital truth. 1. God, the first cause of all things, gives such laws to the operations of the truth upon the minds which He has created, that they are either blessed and softened, or injured and hardened by them. So was He said to harden the heart of Pharaoh. Ex. viii. 3. 2. The preaching of the truth is necessarily a savor of life unto life or of death unto death, as St. Paul testifies. 2 Cor. ii. 16. 3. The man who neglects the truth and chooses sin, is the cause of his own ruin

41 These things said Esaias, when he [a]saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 ¶ Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 ¶ Jesus cried, and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me:

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

[a] Is. 6, 1, &c.

and hardens his own heart, as is spoken of the same Pharaoh, Ex. viii. 32. In all this let us ponder these three important facts, 1. The omniscience and omnipotence of God who ruleth over all, 2. The inevitable effects of causes which He has ordained; and 3. The free will of man, in this life to choose whom he will serve, God or the world. See note, Matt. xiii. 14, 15.

41. *Saw His glory.* Is. vi. 1–10. That is, saw the glory of Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts. Now God the Father no man has seen nor can see. This the Jews believed as an axiom. Hence the passage is an irrefragable proof of the Divinity of Christ. For whom Isaiah declares to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament, St. John declares to be the Christ of the New. ¶ *His glory.* This language is taken from the temple service. The glory of the Lord was the *Shechinah*, or visible presence in the holiest place. This, after a spiritual sort, Isaiah evidently saw in inspired vision, for his language describes it. And this Shechinah was the presence of the Lord, the Jehovah of the first Covenant. Hence if Isaiah was speaking of *Him*, i. e. Christ the Son of God, then the Lord of the New Covenant is the same Jehovah.

42. *Chief rulers.* Members of the Sanhedrim. ¶ *Put out of the synagogue.* Out of the assembly of the Jewish worshippers, that is, excommunicated. Such persons were always in danger of death. ¶ *Did not confess Him.* Did not boldly face the faction of the Pharisees and speak out for the truth. Religion requires different duties in different stations of life. An honest ruler should have perilled all to defend a prophet of his people.

43. *Praise of men.* They loved the favor of this world more than the praise of God. Under these words are contained the fatal causes of unbelief in multitudes, who believe religion to be true, who see a heaven to be won, a hell to be shunned, but tamely float on the current of their worldly habits and gains, down to destruction. They desire a reward in heaven, but they cannot dare the trouble of laboring for it. How strange will this infatuation appear, when we at last see things as they really are.

44. *Jesus cried and said.* Perceiving their unbelief and carnal notions. They could not look beyond the human form, and circumstances of poverty which they saw before them, to the invisible power of God. He then warns them again against the dangers of incredulity. ¶ *Not on Me.* Not on Him alone, a man before their eyes, but their faith would be in the power of God, shown forth by Him. ¶ *Him that sent me.* On God the Father. To believe the messages of a legate is to trust the one sending him. See Mark ix. 17; 1 Thes. iv. 8.

45. *Seeth me.* "He who sees me, as I have shown myself, having the powers of God, truly sees beyond what the senses reveal into the purposes and promises of God." The Hebrews used words of seeing, which carried with them this inward seeing of faith. Thus Habakkuk: "The burden (oracle) which Habakkuk the prophet did see," by the Spirit. Ps. lxiii. 3; Numb. xxiv. 4. The believer perceives the truth of

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: [a]the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For [b]I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

a De. 18. 19.

b De. 18. 18.

the mission from God. Faith is the pure sight and intuition of spiritual truth.

46. *A light unto the world.* A spiritual sun of righteousness, to give instruction, trust and hope to those who were in darkness. See ch. 1–9. ¶ *Darkness.* John iii. 9; 1 John 1–5.

47. *I judge him not.* Jesus came on earth at that time as the Saviour of men, not as a judge. Hereafter He will judge the world, but now He still pleads with sinners, and acts in all things as their mediator with God, leaving the evil of the world, for the time, as He finds it. And they who refused to believe, were to meet, for the time, only the natural consequences of their sins. Comp. ch. viii. 15.

48. *He that rejecteth Me.* See the prophecy concerning Him, Deut. xviii. 19. The word *reject* means to neglect or despise. ¶ *Hath one.* The rest of this verse shows who this is, namely, the Word or Covenant of the Gospel, which being offered freely, and confirmed by a multitude of proofs to the consciences of men, would make all without excuse before God. See the same in other words, 1 John iii. 19–21. ¶ *The word that I have spoken.* See notes, ch. ix. 41; and Mark xvi. 16. This expression is cast in the most general form, and applies equally to men ever since, to ourselves among them. The Gospel is the *last* Covenant, and reveals the will of God fully and finally. If we reject it, we shall be self-condemned, be judged guilty by its terms of reception, and must meet the Son of man in fearful retribution at the last day.

49. *A commandment.* A commission to save the race, and to provide safety for believers in Himself. Ps. xi. 7, 8.

50. *Life everlasting.* It is the source and means of life eternal with God, to all those who keep the terms of the Covenant of this Gospel. Those conditions are repentance and forsaking of all sin, a faith to believe all the terms and truths of revealed religion, a sure purpose to lead a new life, following after God's commands, hope in Christ as the alone meritorious cause of salvation, that charity which is the fulfilling of the law, and obedience to all that is commanded, with baptism, which makes us members of Christ, and the holy supper, wherein our souls are strengthened by grace; all leading to and resulting in holiness. And thus concludes this narrative of St. John, concerning the *public* teaching of Jesus. The remaining chapters describe private scenes and prayers which occurred in the narrow circle of His disciples. This much of the public teaching of our Saviour St. John felt it necessary to commit to paper for the instruction of all ages of Christians, in his general proposition, that "ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life." For though the rest of this Gospel is still on the same subject, yet this public portion contains our Lord's utterance of

CHAPTER XIII.

PASSION WEEK.—WEDNESDAY.

NOW[a] before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that [b]his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

a Mat. 26. 2. *b* Ch. 12. 23.

2 And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him,)

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had [c]given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

c Mat. 11. 27; Ac. 2, 36; 1 Cor. 15. 27; He. 2. 8.

the great system of the New Covenant, the complete revelation of God's will. These things we must do to be saved. God grant us grace to believe, and do as we have learned from Christ Jesus our Lord. "O Almighty God, Who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto Thy people, that they may love the thing which Thou commandest and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—*Collect 4th Sunday after Easter.*

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *Before the feast.* On Wednesday evening after sunset, when the first day of unleavened bread had begun. There intervene here properly the events of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Passion Week, as recorded by St. Matthew (chs. xxi. 18 to xxvi. 14) and St. Mark (xi. 12 to xix. 10). ¶ *His hour was come.* The very events of His betrayal and death. The Sanhedrim was at this hour in session conspiring against Him, to which Judas went from this scene. ¶ *His own.* The chosen disciples. He had never remembered His own sorrows, in His love for them, and though He was now overwhelmed with the approach of His agonies, He continued to teach and admonish them, as He had done from the beginning. He left nothing undone which might prepare them for the events about to happen.

2. *Supper being ended.* They remained at the table after this, engaged in conversation. This was the evening before the Passover supper. ¶ *The devil.* Diabolus. The Slanderer. This name marks the character of the enemy of all good while engaged in destroying the souls of men. He had left Jesus for a season, and now returns to set in motion the agencies of wicked men, for His destruction. Lu. iv. 13; Eph. vi. 11; Rev. xii. 9. ¶ *Put into the heart.* Judas had loved this world and its goods more than God, and now in some hapless moment, the evil spirit which is ever on the watch for opportunities of temptation, seizes upon this advantage and sways him to sin. We are not to imagine Judas as driven to this act by a power which he could not resist, for then he would be so far irresponsible. But while he acted, as he thought, in a way to secure his own gains, the devil *used* him, as he still does wicked men, to compass his own detestable designs. He never gets power over us until we are ready to give it to him.

3. *Jesus knowing.* In this act of His humiliation, He had before Him the immediate knowledge of His unspeakable dignity, both as Son of God and Head of the Church. And both are mentioned as a perpetual example that "the same mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus." Phil. ii. 5. There is no dignity of birth or rank in the Church, which exempts us from a like humility, not in the action of washing feet, unless it becomes at any time necessary, but in the spirit which is shown by this servitude. 1 Tim. v. 10. ¶ *Had given all things, &c.* That is, had made Him Head and King of the mediatorial kingdom, which is the Church. To the

4 [a]He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and [‖]Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, [b]If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

[a] Phil. 2. 7. 8.

[‖] Gr. *he.* [b] 1 Cor. 6. 11; Eph. 5. 26. Ti. 3. 5; He 10. 22.

enjoyment of this honor He was to ascend by the merits of His death, and thus receive the promise. See Ps. ii. 7, 8; Matt. xxviii. 18. ¶ *Was come from God.* Was God by nature. See note, ch. viii. 42. ¶ *Went to God.* Was about to ascend far above all principalities and powers, with the glory combined of Supreme God and all perfect Mediator. Eph. i. 20, 21.

4. *His garments.* The outer garment, as was usual when any one was about to engage in any active occupation. ¶ *Girded Himself.* Bound His other garments about with the towel after the manner of a servant.

5. *Began to wash.* This washing was an act of hospitality. It was refreshing to persons whose feet were exposed all day to the dust and sun. Gen. xliii, 24; 1 Sam. xxv. 41; Lu. vii. 44. This act of humility taught emblematically, 1. That the blood of Jesus was to wash away their sins as the water their bodies. Heb. x. 22. 2. That the spirit in us must seek that moral purity and freedom from worldliness and selfishness, by a similar humility. Ver. 14.

6. *Dost Thou wash my feet?* A remonstrance. It cannot be allowed that you, our Master and Lord, should condescend to this act. Had Jesus been as earthly kings, Peter would have been right; but it was the proud dream of that kingdom, which Jesus would wash out of his heart. If Peter had understood this act, he could have been prepared to see Jesus yield Himself to the soldiers who came to take Him.

7. *Thou knowest not now.* You do not see the spiritual design of it, for your heart is still fixed on earthly things, and needs the regeneration of the Spirit. ¶ *Shall know hereafter.* After the Holy Spirit comes down and illuminates your mind, you will discover the harmony of all My acts, and know that this humility is sublimer than the state of kings. See what St. Peter thought of humility after he became an Apostle. Acts x. 41; 1 Pet. ii. 20–24; iv. 16. This knowledge was partly gained by the illumination of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost (see note, ch. xii. 16), partly by the gradual wisdom of a Christian experience. It was pride which caused Peter to fall the next night and deny his Lord, the pride of a heart conscious of valor to do and dare great things for an earthly king. Jesus, as it were, now denies all worldly state, as if to teach him, if not yet too late, to see the need of spiritual grace, which is gained by first denying self and trusting in God.

8. *Never wash my feet.* "Such is my love that I cannot submit to it." But as it was a word of a true heart, though a mistaken one, Jesus bears with him, and persists. Men sometimes call Peter cowardly. Was it the wish of Jesus to gain a coward's heart? Did not Peter keep his word, and dare to draw his sword against a mob? It is a brave heart in him, but as all things show, a heart wedded to the notion that Jesus was to be a conqueror of bodies, not a Saviour of souls, and it was this error which led him to shame. ¶ *If I wash thee not.* "If I do not purify thee inwardly from all proud and carnal notions, which cleave to thee yet from the dust

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

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and filth of thy journey in this life, of which inward washing thou wilt yet understand this to be a symbol, thou canst not have the holiness and spirituality which becomes My disciple." Jesus might have punished Peter even for the small act of disobedience concerning the washing of his feet, since it would have been very sinful if he had persisted in it. But He seems rather to use the words taken from the passing event, in a higher, spiritual sense: and when we remember how wild were the carnal dreams of Peter, we can feel how emphatic was this address to him, when these dreams being destroyed, he saw the danger in which he had been on account of them. We may learn from this, the pride of such as wilfully neglect the ordinances which Christ has appointed. For no matter how little we may discover of union in them with the life of the soul, yet if He has said that they are necessary as acts of obedience, and for the giving of inward grace, our duty is simply to obey and give Him thanks. ¶ *Hast no part with Me.* "Thou, by wilfulness, dost cut thyself off from My society, and dost become an alien." How fearful are self-will and disobedience shown to be, when such a punishment is declared to follow them.

9. *Not my feet only, &c.* Understanding our Lord to be speaking in the carnal sense of the merits of a washing of water by Him, he would have it applied to his whole person. It was like him to give up all with eagerness, and he changes his rash resolution for a prayer as impetuous. The vivacity of his temper was that characteristic which most frequently appears in him. And it gives peculiar force to his example, since we see one of so hasty a temper, becoming at the last a disciplined, meek and patient soldier of the cross. This disposition was a stumbling-block till enlightened by the Spirit; it then became a fearless and energetic element in his character.

10. *He that is washed, &c.* This is an energetic expression of a spiritual law, and becomes the more emphatic as passing away from the natural custom of washing the body. If a man's *body* is washed, the whole must be immersed in order to be cleansed from dirt. And as our Saviour had used this figure for *inward* purity, He now gives it such a form as can be applied to no other purification. Thus He startles, as it were, the mind into questioning deeper into His speech to find its meaning. Thus He spake to the woman at the well (John iv. 14. Comp. vii. 38, 39) and to the crowds. Ch. vi. 35, 51, 63. So that the opinion of certain washings attending the Pascal supper, which from some imagined peculiarity may explain this verse, is as useless as it is dubious. For this was not the Pascal supper, but the supper of Wednesday evening. Our Lord teaches this much: "The body must be washed wholly to be clean. But why will you understand me after so long a time, in this carnal sense, as caring for such cleansing at this moment? He that is inwardly purified by the Spirit which I shall give, is wholly pure, though obeying me in this so small a command as submitting to have his feet washed by My hands." Grace goes not by measure and size, but is spiritual, and comes as a free gift and not by carnal efforts and laws. The opinion of the Fathers seems nearer the truth—"It is our feet, i. e., the affections of our mind, that are to be given up to Jesus to be washed, that our feet may be beautiful; especially if we emulate higher gifts and wish to be numbered with those who preach glad tidings."—*Origen.* "*The human affections* then, without which we cannot live in this world, are, as it were, *our feet*, which connect us with human things,

11 For he knew who should betray him: therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; [a]ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If [b]ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

18 ¶ I speak not of you all; I known whom I have chosen; but that the scripture may be fulfilled, [c]He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me.

a Ro. 12. 10; Gal. 6. 1, 2; 1 Pe. 5. 5.

b Jas. 1. 25. *c* Ps. 41. 9.

so that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. But if we confess our sins, He who washed the disciples' feet forgives, us our sins even down to our feet, wherewith we hold converse with earth."—*St. Augustine.* ¶ *Every whit.* Every particle, wholly. ¶ *Ye are clean.* This word is as a key to mark that the verse is to be taken in a spiritual sense. You are men whose sins are pardoned by your connection with Me. ¶ *Not all.* Judas excepted. Our Saviour makes this exception, to show the traitor that his wickedness is discovered.

13. *Master, &c.* See Matt. xxiii. 10.

14, 15. *If I then, &c.* "If I, your superior, do this, ye should have equal humility, nor feel that any humiliation for the good of the brethren is to be refused." That this example is to be taken in a spiritual sense, would hardly seem doubtful to any one who had read the Gospels. For the action and the words are important because they manifest *humility*, and were peculiar to the Jewish habits of thought. But that which then was indeed humility, would become Pharisaic if literally observed now. The Bishop of Rome performs this ceremony yearly, from an impious pride of representing himself as Vicar of Christ. A set of fanatics observed it for a time, till they were punished for their folly and wickedness. Any Christian should learn from it, 1. That every office of mercy and charity to his brethren is to be willingly performed on occasion. He is one pledged to that humbleness of mind that he should be ready at any time to manifest his love for the Church at any cost to his own ease. 2. He should learn that above all things he be *clothed with humility*: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." 1 Pet. v. 5.

16, 17. *The servant, &c.* This is a maxim universally true. It applies forcibly to this example. This verse explains in what sense the whole scene is to be considered, and becomes the moral of it. "You My servants dream of a monarchy and high places in it. Be warned, and remember to-morrow night that I, your Master, have set you an example of humility, and lay it to heart. The shame from which you will then shrink, you must yet face, if you will still be My disciples."

18. *Not of you all.* One has so far fallen that My instructions are of no benefit to him—Judas. ¶ *I know whom I have chosen.* I know which of you are faithful, and are answering the love which I felt for you when I chose you to be My disciples." Ch. vi. 64, 70. All had been chosen to receive His in-

19 [f]Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [a]that one of you shall betray me.

[f] Or, *from henceforth.*

[a] Ac. 1. 17; 1 Jno. 2. 19.

structions, so that Judas had the same opportunity as the others. God does not compel any man to sin, nor choose any to be lost. But He does not love those who refuse grace, with that tenderness and choice which He manifests for His true children. Jesus had known the character of Judas from the first. But Judas had exercised the same freedom of choice in betraying his Lord, as Peter or John had shown in loving Him. Each followed the choice of his heart—Judas, gold; Peter, truth. "Our Lord acknowledged Judas one of the chosen, bnt declared that though chosen, he would be a traitor."—*Bp. White.* ¶ *That the Scriptures, &c.* That the words of the Psalm concerning Me should have its exact fulfilment. This is recorded in Ps. xli. 9. David, who was a type of the Messiah, there speaks of Ahithophel, who acted the part of Judas in his degree. The prophecies of Scripture become grander, when they first fulfil themselves in men living before Christ, and then pass over them to have their full purpose answered in Him. See 2 Sam. xv. 31; xvi. 23; xvii. 23. ¶ *Eateth bread with Me.* The rites of hospitality and social life are of most sacred character in the East. The wild Arab will not molest the traveller who has eaten bread with him, and will spare his most hated foe, if he by any chance partakes of the same food with him. Ingratitude and treachery in a man's friend or housemate are detestable among all nations. It was aggravated treachery, therefore, for any man to use his knowledge, which was gained in the confidence of friendship, against his friend, as Ahithophel and Judas did. ¶ *Hath lifted up his heel.* Hath become proud and hostile against Me. The Hebrew words picture a man turning from another, and walking away to his enemies with gestures of contempt. The oriental nations are even yet as sensitive as children to such open gestures of ridicule, as hissing, strutting by one, and the like. The Psalms abound with marks of such sensitiveness in the Jews. Judas did his act in the dark, but his ingratitude was even darker than that which gave David the bitter experience which appears in the forty-first psalm.

19 *Now I tell you.* Jesus prepared His disciples for the future, by giving them instructions, warnings and doctrines, which would afterwards all fall into a perfect harmony, and convince them of His truth and wisdom. Some of these doctrines were too lofty for their comprehension, some too strange for their belief, some too hard for their simplicity, but at last, when the Holy Ghost touched the mass of His instructions in their memories, all things became plain and easy to them.

20 *He that receiveth, &c.* See Matt. x. 40. This was added to comfort them with the promise that they should receive the Divine blessing in making choice of His service. "When you recall these sayings, and then know that I am the Messias, then remember at the same time that with your choice goes life or death. Then if you are faithful and loving, you shall receive the Father's love. For the law of my kingdom is, that all who believe in Me and love Me shall be loved of my Father."

21. *Troubled in spirit.* Ch. xii. 27. Was inwardly disturbed, and manifested it by signs. He loved even the immortal soul of the traitor and would not

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the ‖sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.

‖ Or, *morsel.*

give him up, without one final testimonial of the grief which his ingratitude cost Him. Jesus was in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He had been intimate with Judas for three years. Now they part: in a few days the agony of One will be over, of the other begun. He shows the pain of the thoughts of that treachery and its results which His words next express. ¶ *Testified.* Bore witness to the treachery which was in the heart of Judas. He testified to that which was as yet secret to the rest of the company.

22. *Doubting of whom He spake.* This is a fearful mark of the character of this man. His outer life was so pious, in seeming, that he did not betray himself, though he did his Lord. The gentle John, the impetuous Peter and the pious James had each in turn been rebuked by Christ for their intemperate zeal; but Judas had run so well, so prudently, so cautiously, that no one knew his heart, perhaps not even he knew it, until the temptation came. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,"

23. *Disciple whom Jesus loved.* St. John speaks of himself thus five times, chs. xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20; and thrice mentions that he reclined on His bosom, v. 25; ch. xxi. 20. He was the youngest of the company, and probably of an age to render such intimacy graceful and natural, without exciting the envy of the rest. Between him and the Saviour existed a friendship, which gives a peculiar charm to all that he has written, and impressed upon his then susceptible heart the beautiful forms of Divine love, to which in after life he delighted to give utterance. The shepherd bears the lambs in his bosom, and lamblike was this youthful disciple. It is probable that this phrase, in the mind of St. John, was as much a modest confession of that weakness, which rendered such tenderness from Jesus necessary to him, as a sacred exultation in the possession of it. Those who need a lesson, may take permission from this fact, to love tenderly their friends, and give them a particular regard. ¶ *On Jesus' bosom.* That is, reclining next to Him on the couch at table, so that by turning his head or leaning back he could address Him in a low voice; see note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

25. *Lying on Jesus' breast.* Reclining back a little upon Him that he might be heard. This was done in compliance with the beckoning motion of Peter.

26. *Jesus answered.* In a low voice to St. John. It is not probable that any others heard Him. The deed itself was yet to be done, so that Jesus does not expose it, though He does the treachery meditated. On the following (Thursday) evening at the Passover, the conspiracy having then been made by Judas, Jesus renews the subject and exposes Judas before all the others. Matt. xxvi. 25. ¶ *Shall give a sop.* A small bit of bread, which was dipped into some liquid sauce on the table. The Eastern people still practise this mode of eating, without knives or forks, dipping up any liquids with the bread. The ancients having but one hand free, as they reclined on the left arm, the food was taken in the right hand and so conveyed to the mouth. It is still usual to hand a sop of any nicer portion

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then, having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night.

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

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of food to the guests at a feast. This act of our Saviour was an expressive one, as Judas must have recognized its meaning. "You a disciple, my friend and companion, after receiving so many proofs of my love, are you to betray me? Pause and think once more."

27. *After the sop.* Kindness to a wicked man is as heaping coals upon a fire, it increases his zeal to do wrong. This act of gentleness and silent reproof, being disregarded, Judas is still more hardened in sin, and resolves anew. Perhaps he looked upon this, as a mark of confidence, and thought that his design was secret. ¶ *Satan entered into him.* He fell more under the power of the devil, now called Satan, the great *adversary.* A man, we often say, becomes hardened in sin, by refusing the grace of God. Spirits see a corresponding line of action, as the man falls more and more under the power of the devil. ¶ *That thou doest, do quickly.* These are the words simply of permission, even as the language of the angel of the Lord in suffering Balaam to go to Balak even after it had been shown him to be forbidden. Numb. xxii. 12, 20, 35. God permits evil, but neither causes nor commands it. Our Lord knew better than Judas that the time was short, and that his opportunity to betray was already come. He gives him this permission in general terms, so as probably to leave Judas to ponder on its meaning amid his guilty fears and hopes.

28. *No man knew.* Not even John knew the force of the words; what the treachery was, which Judas plotted, nor what and when the evil would happen. The other disciples did not hear the previous words. We may wonder more at the mystery of sin, when we find that such a man could have been in such company and not have discovered himself, not have had every finger pointed at him in scorn, with "Thou art the man." ¶ *Bag.* Purse or travelling scrip to hold food. See note, ch. xii. 6. ¶ *Against the feast.* The Passover supper, which came the following evening: this was Wednesday; the supper which Jesus kept with His disciples came on Thursday evening. It was necessary to make ready a room and to obtain a lamb, herbs, wine, &c., for the Pascal supper. This charge was committed the next day to Peter and John. Luke xxii. 8. The rest had so little fear of any infidelity in Judas, that they were not made suspicious of him by these words.

30. *It was night.* A night marked with a note of sadness ever since, as from time immemorial the Church has observed Wednesday as a day of abstinence, on account of this deed of Judas. Late as it was, tradition marks the general spot, where he sought and found the Sanhedrim in session and completed his compact with them. Satan, who had entered into more than him, had provided and assembled the buyers of his conscience. Now begins the glory of the Messiah—His Redemption.

31. *Now is the Son of man glorified.* This departure from their company of the lost Judas, left only those who had part in the glory of the Redeemer. And no bar was now wanting to the great act of His love, His dying for a sinful

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say to you.

34 [a]A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love another.

a Lev. 19. 18; Eph. 5. 2; 1 Thes. 4. 9; Jas. 2. 8; 1 Jno. 2. 7.

world. It is probable that both senses are contained in the words, "The unclean went out, the clean remained with their cleanser. Thus will it be when the tares are separated from the wheat." —*St. Augustine.* "Christ at His death, in which he glorified God, having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."—*Origen.*

32. *If God be glorified in Him.* "If His obedience even unto death is manifested by His patience and perfect resignation as man, then will He truly honor the Father and reveal His will, in this work of Atonement." ¶ *He will glorify Him.* Will glorify Him as Son of man; will grant Him victory over death, make Him the Saviour of sinners, and give Him a name at which every knee shall bow, here on earth in willing, or before Him as Judge eternal, in unwilling reverence. Phil. ii. 10. That glory began by nature paying Him honor, when the earth quaked and the sun was darkened. It will increase in the conversion of men, till it reaches the surpassing glories of the Judgment. ¶ *In Himself.* By glory and Divine powers committed to Him, not by any agent, whether man or angel. He was made the source of all blessing, on account of His obedience even unto death. ¶ *Straightway.* Immediately. It was no far removed prospect of future honor. It was with thoughts of this glory, that Jesus sought to establish the hearts of His disciples, which were soon to be sorely tried.

33. *Little children.* There is great tenderness and pity in this address. Tenderness, for Jesus loved them truly; pity, for no babe sporting on the brink of a cataract was ever more unconscious of the tremendous agencies at work around him. They were docile, and faithful disciples, and had remained with Him in His trials, but now the shepherd would be smitten and the sheep scattered. They would desert Him in terror or deny Him from shame. They had yet no spiritual insight, and therefore no strength against the coming woes. And in view of this danger, Jesus speaks thus in infinite pity. ¶ *A little while.* Not two whole days. He was crucified on Friday morning. ¶ *To the Jews.* See ch. vii. 34. ¶ *So now, &c.* To them in rebuke of their pride, to you in love. They were to work out their salvation by the Apostleship, and now He gives them solemn charge of the great rule of charity, which receives peculiar emphasis from its coming from the lips of one so soon to die.

34. *A new commandment. New,* in the sense that this feeling was to be more exalted in favor and activity, by the aid of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, than it had ever been in men before. The Law commanded the Jews to love their neighbor as themselves, but left this in a degree to the natural instinct of human reason. It suffered them to exercise certain distinctions, and contained some maxims of a severer cast. But now the Christian was to be exalted to a higher degree of privilege, and must exercise a greater charity to the brethren, than the Jews had ever done. St. John expatiates upon this law as "no new commandment, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning" of the Gospel times, and "again a new commandment, true in Him and in you, because the darkness (of Jewish and heathen times) is past and the true light now shineth," the light of the Holy Spirit dwelling in man, and bringing forth the fruits of

35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 ¶ Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, Whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; [a]but thou shalt follow me afterward.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

[a] 2 Pe. 1. 14.

CHAPTER XIV.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

love and righteousness. See 1 John ii. 7, 8; and 2 Epis. 6. St. Paul calls it "the fulfilling of the whole law," in which sense, it is the Christian Law, as St. James terms it the "royal law," and "the law of liberty." See Rom. xiii. 10; Gal v. 14; James i. 25; ii. 8; and tradition relates of St. John, "when he was asked by his brethren, why he so frequently inculcated this precept, saying, 'My little children, love one another,' replied, "Because it is the Lord's commandment, *and if it be done it is enough*." "For," says St. Augustine, "he who loves God cannot despise His commandment, that he should love his neighbor; and he who loves his neighbor in a heavenly, spiritual way, in the neighbor loves God." The divine beauty and force of this precept is set forth at large by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xiii. It is the life of the Church that it is filled by this Spirit of Christ; the salvation of the soul, that it abounds in those fruits which show forth this spiritual principle.

35. *By this shall all men, &c.* Passing over the great signs of power, miracles and the gift of tongues with prophecy, which were to follow all them that believe, Jesus insists on this principle of love, as the distinguishing mark of the Christian Church. For miracles may be done by the wicked, and prophecy may be deceptive, but this charity never faileth. It shows to the world of sinners the greatest, the never ceasing miracle of grace, *the regeneration of the human soul* from its natural state to a new life. The heathen could bring their thaumaturgists, working false miracles, their oracles revered by them as speaking from the inspiration of idol gods, but they had nothing to compare to this love, and could only exclaim in wonder, "See how these Christians love one another!" And now that tongues and miracles have ceased, the great banner over the Church, by which it conquers, is love. And every Christian may offer, by his own life, an example of charity, which shall speak more loudly to sinners around him of the truth of religion, than all other evidences.

36. *Thou shalt follow me afterwards.* Meaning some years afterwards. St. Peter should be put to death in a similar manner, and so follow Him to glory. He was crucified in the reign of Nero. See John xxi. 18.

38. *The cock shall not crow.* It shall not be the time of cock-crowing, tomorrow night, before this shall occur. When Jesus repeats this warning He speaks more exactly. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 33, 34.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Let not your heart be troubled.* "Do not despair at these words of Mine." The disciples had been greatly disturbed by the solemn, and to them, strange warnings of the previous chapter. They are in perplexity and grief. Jesus seeks to comfort them by promises of future blessings which they shall enjoy. The writer has seized, by the aid of inspiration, on such portions of this conver-

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

a Ch. 17. 24; 1 Thes. 4. 17.

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sation, as bear upon all times, and comfort the Christian now, as they did the Apostles in their times. This conversation occurred on Wednesday night. After it Jesus retired, probably for secret prayer. ¶ *Ye believe in God.* You put trust and confidence in God, whom as Jews you have always worshipped. Do it now, and be comforted that He will do all things well. ¶ *Believe also in Me.* Put the same confidence in Me, for we are one. "Faith in Me and in the Father that begat Me, is more powerful than any thing that shall come upon you. He shows His Divinity at the same time by discerning their inward feelings."—*St. Chrysostom.*

2, 3. *In My Father's house.* In heaven, where God dwells, and to which I am to return. ¶ *Many mansions.* Many places of rest or abode. Heaven is a place of glory, with room for all. Thither you may go, if you confide in Me, though you cannot follow Me now. Their minds needed this comforting promise, as they were troubled at the thought of His leaving them. The plural here seems to justify the ancient interpretation, that there are many grades of glory and recompense in heaven, according to the declaration of St. Paul,—"one star differeth from another star in glory." 1 Cor. xv. 40, 41. "For though one man is bolder, wiser, juster, holier than another, yet no one shall be removed from that house of God, but each shall receive a mansion suited to his deserts."—*St. Augustine.* "The many mansions agree with the one penny, because, though one may rejoice more than another, yet all rejoice with one and the same joy, arising from the vision of their Maker."—*St. Gregory.* ¶ *I go, &c.* It is necessary for the purposes of My atonement, that I should be in heaven and before God, for your sakes, that I may there plead the cause of all believers, as the High Priest and Advocate of sinners, the Mediator between Him and you. "Such an high Priest became us (was necessary for us), holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, *and made higher than the heavens.*" Hebrews vii. 26; vi. 20; ix. 24–28; x. 19–22. ¶ *Where I am.* Now as the Son of God, and to be as the Son of man, i. e., in heaven. ¶ *Ye may be also.* You may yet come and dwell. This language, so plain to us now, was doubtless new and strange to them. They looked for a reward and a home here. They were not prepared to hear of one beyond the grave. The believer now rejoices in this hope, that he is so closely united to Christ that he *must* follow Him hereafter, even as the body follows the head. Eph. i. 13, 14; Col. iii. 3, 4.

4. *Whither I go ye know.* Ye have been told, that I go to the Father. Jesus knowing their curiosity excites them to ask Him questions. For though they knew this with the hearing of the ear, yet their hearts were heavy and they could not receive it. ¶ *The way ye know.* For He had often, in the last few months, told them that He was to die on the cross and rise again. Matt. xvi. 21; Lu. ix. 22; xviii. 31, 32. The *way* seems to include a holy life of Christian love, concerning which He was speaking at the time.

5. *We know not, &c.* They knew, for it had been told them plainly: they

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am [a]the way, and [b]the truth, and [c]the life; [d]no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

a He. 9. 8. *b* Ch. 1. 17; & 8. 32. *c* Ch. 11. 25. *d* Ch. 10. 9.

knew not, as they could not believe that Jesus had meant that He should die, though He told them so. Such is the power of prejudice, that it does not recognize truth, when laid open before it. Such was the *necessity* of the Holy Spirit to open the human mind to spiritual things, that twelve men had walked with Jesus for three years and more, without *knowing* so plain a truth as this.

6. *I am the way.* "You are in doubt about the way to God. I am the way in My life, doctrine, example, and by My meritorious death." Christ is the last revelation of God, bringing to light His perfect will by which we can become like Him, and justified by His grace. He became man and dwelt among us, that "in all things He might be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. ii. 17. He set an example of "the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And in His precious death and glorious resurrection He is the author of the hope of eternal redemption to all who believe. See Is. xxxv. 8. ¶ *The truth.* The perfect instructor of all truth, pertaining to salvation, all the requirements of God, and all that man needs to give him hope of entering a state of blessedness hereafter. See Eph. iv. 20–24. ¶ *The life.* The source of pardon of sins and of the graces of regeneration, and of the powers of the resurrection. See note, ch. xi. 25. ¶ *No man cometh, &c.* God will accept no man, but by the merits of the redemption made by Christ "for the sins of the whole world." His is "the only name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved; neither is there salvation in any other," Acts iv. 12. For all those who receive the Gospel must be saved by the obedience of faith in its conditions, and the conditions turn upon the cross of Christ. For all others who may have obeyed as they knew the truth of things, Christ is to be their Judge, and He will be merciful and just; but to Him all must bow as a Saviour.

7. *If ye had known Me.* If, laying aside their own dreams of Him as a king on earth, they had "compared spiritual things with spiritual," and discovered that He was to be the Saviour of men from their sins, not of Jews from Romans, then they would have known the true will and character of the Divine Being. No man truly knows Christ in this Scriptural sense, who does not put away his own prejudices, and receive the truth with the docility of a child. Many may know the history of grace, and think they need nothing more to be saved, who have so blinded their eyes with disobedience and prejudice, as "to know nothing as they ought to know." To know the Father we must believe on the Son, and with the help of the Spirit, "do the commandments" which He has revealed. ¶ *From henceforth.* After a little, when I am gone, and the Spirit has come to lead you into all truth. ¶ *Have seen Him.* Have seen His character by spiritual insight into the life and designs of Christ His Son, who has revealed Him. See Matt. xi. 27.

8. *Shew us the Father.* No man can see God with the bodily eye. This Philip must have known, and as a Jew believed also, that no one could see Him and live. But he asks for some sublime discovery of His visible presence such as that made to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. iii.), and to others at dif-

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, [a]hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

a Col. 1. 15; He. 1. 3.

ferent times. For he thought that something like that of which he had read in the Old Scriptures, would convince him and suffice. But if he could not be convinced by the manifestations of God made by Christ, the terrific glories of Sinai would have been no help. Men always seek for conviction in something which they imagine as expelling all doubt, while God gives faith to the humble mind which receives and values the means of grace which are at hand. Philip forgot that the Israelites who beheld the scene of Sinai, rebelled through unbelief before they had left its foot.

9. *So long time.* Jesus had taught the disciples for three years and a half, with instructions which could not be recorded for number. In them He had, as we read, constantly taught that He was one with the Father, and that the true knowledge of God was a moral perception of God's will acting upon the soul. God is a Spirit, and must be known by the spirit, not by the physical eye. And our knowledge of Him is gained not as we read in philosophy from words like "immaterial, invisible, immense," &c. (which are vague and incomprehensible attributes to us mortals) but as He is revealed in Christ first, in our own regenerate souls afterwards. ¶ *Hath seen the Father.* Spiritually, as a God of love, grace, mercy and truth. It was to give us this power to know God, that the Son of God became incarnate. "The Son of God being known with the understanding, it follows that the Father is known also, forasmuch as He is the image of God, not differing from but expressing His Author."—*St. Hillary.*

10. *I am in the Father.* See note, ch. x. 38. ¶ *He doeth the works.* See notes, chs. v. 17; x. 30. Christ ascribes all His works and doctrines to God, as He was man, to the Father, as He was the Son.

11. *Believe Me.* Believe this, by putting aside your imagination of a special grand spectacle of the presence of God. ¶ *Or else.* Or in case you cannot do this, and take My word, because I speak to you as a man, then there is another consideration. ¶ *The very works' sake.* "Then, look to the works which I have wrought by powers certainly supernatural and beyond all the miracles ever recorded of the prophets, and let them confirm your faith in My word." Philip was groping for absolute conviction. He hesitated at reasonable faith. Do we never dream in this manner, and imagine that if we had been with Jesus in the flesh and seen His miracles, we would have been wiser than Philip? And yet doing so, we are imitating his weakness. Believe now such proofs as *are now given* of the truth and be wise.

12. *He that believeth on Me.* That continues to believe until the Spirit descends, shall have this power. This is a solemn declaration, as the word *verily* repeated shows. It foretells the apostolic power, when these very disciples and others should enter on a new state of being, and gain loftier graces than they

13 [a]And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

15 ¶ [b]If ye love me, keep my commandments:

a Jas. 1. 5; 1 Jno. 3. 22; & 5. 14.

b 1 Jno. 5. 3.

then dreamed of. ¶ *The works that I do.* Not merely works of power, are here meant, such as miracles of healing, recalling the dead, &c., but *works of grace*, healing sinful souls and calling dead spirits to life and love, as the next words show. ¶ *Greater works than these.* Nothing shows the seductive power of imagination in man, more than the continual tendency we have, to exalt *miracles above graces*, in matters of religion. Commentators are perplexed here to show how this sentence may be made true; but a little care may help us to avoid error. For we know that no man ever did the miracles which Jesus did, either in number or importance. Power shone in Him supreme; after Him it declined. Therefore no man had done *greater* miracles. This is established. But let us read it of works of *grace*, and see if it be not in exact harmony with other truths. Jesus called His disciples and instructed them. They were the *best* of His followers. But He says of them after that they could not *understand His Gospel*, until the Comforter came. This did not occur until after and *in consequence of* His ascent into heaven. Therefore the works of the time before Pentecost (Acts ii.) were not intended to reach the dignity of that *gift of the indwelling Spirit.* It was to show man's need of that gift, that the disciples were left to *human reason*, with the lesser aids of grace under the Jewish covenant, until the Spirit came. This any one may see who compares this verse with verses 16, 17; ch. xv. 26, 27; ch. xvi. 7–15: and Acts i. 5–8, shews that the disciples continued in their Jewish state of mistake till the great Pentecost. After that period the apostles preached the Gospel, with the Spirit of Christ, acting instantly upon men to regenerate them and dwell in them. For these works, done by grace, are greater works than *miracles*, as it is a grander display of God's power to *save a soul*, than to resuscitate a corpse; to make one a "partaker of the Divine nature," than to restore the body to health. And thus we must interpret these words, with praise to our Saviour for the powers which His Spirit works in us and about us. ¶ *Because I go to the Father.* See our Lord's own explanation, that it was expedient that He should go to heaven first. Ch. xvi. 7. For the gift of the Holy Ghost *was in consequence* of the redemption made by His death, and must follow it in time. But the *because* shows us, that this power came forth from Him, after His exaltation. Eph. iv. 8–16.

13. *Whatsoever ye shall ask.* This promise which referred first of all to the disciples, for it was given at this juncture for their especial comfort, is continued under Scriptural limitations to all Christians, as St. James shows. Epis. i. 5–7; iv. 3. Whatever spiritual comfort we ask in faith and with wills submissive to the Almighty Ruler, is vouchsafed us. ¶ *In my name.* Offering as a plea My merits, not your own. To ask in the name of another, is to give the character and merit of that other as the reason for making the request. And the Church has always put forward the name and deserts of Christ in her prayer to the Father. God sees the sinner, who is in covenant with the Son, as claiming the precious blood-shedding of the Saviour, to atone for his own sins and to make up for the want of merit in himself. The Apostles used the name of Jesus in their miracles (Acts vi. 3) and prayers. Acts iv. 30. We now plead the same merits of Christ in all our prayers. ¶ *That will I do.* All power was given to Him, in things pertaining to His people. He then works for us, while we pray to the Father through Him. Eph. ii. 18. ¶ *May be glorified.* See note, ch. xiii. 31.

15. *If ye love Me.* They, who would know if they love Christ, may take it to

16 And I will pray the Father, and [a]he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever:

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom [b]the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, [c]and shall be in you.

a Ch. 15. 26; & 16. 7; Ro. 8. 15, 16.

b 1 Cor. 2. 44. *c* 1 Jno. 2. 27.

heart, that they must show this proof of their love, namely, active obedience. Love is not a feeling or dormant principle, and cannot be known by words and lips, "but in deed and in truth," by constant effort to do as Christ commanded. 1 John iii. 18, 19. ¶ *Keep my commandments.* Faith is the alone instrument of our justification, and hope of salvation is given us, in its exercise; but still it remains inviolably true that "*he that doeth righteousness*, is righteous." 1 John iii. 7, and v. 2, 3. The simple who cannot comprehend the subtleties of the schools, can always try their lives and hearts by this rule, and if they are right according to it, God is greater than their hearts and knoweth all things. Many of the evils which we now suffer would be removed, if Christians held more closely by this rule.

16. *I will pray the Father.* "When I am gone I will speak face to face with the Father, and obtain for you another blessing, which shall teach your prayers to be harmonious and acceptable." Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us, but here He refers to one act of mediation, which marks the epoch of the Christian Church. After He had atoned for the sins of men, then He obtained that great, best gift of the indwelling Spirit, which He here promised. See Rom. viii. 34; 1 John ii. 2; Heb. vii. 25. ¶ *Another Comforter.* In Greek, *Paraclete.* The Advocate, Guide, or Comforter. This is the title given from this time forth to the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, henceforth it was to be "*in you*," that is to take up a more intimate abode in the race, and on the one side unite them to God; on the other comfort, instruct and guide the believers. Before this the Spirit of God had wrought with men, had knocked as it were at the door of their hearts and had effected all that was righteous in their lives. And the Hebrew language in accordance with this has framed its usages, to represent the Spirit as coming down *upon* men. Hereafter He was to dwell in them, in larger measure, greater power, and more decided impulsive energy, to lead them into the spiritual life, to *regenerate them* in the new covenant, to communicate the blessings of the atonement and to sanctify them. There are three that bear record in heaven: three Persons in the Godhead. All have a part peculiar to them in our salvation. The Father sent the Son to die for us. The Son obtained the merits of propitiation. The Spirit applies those merits and effects the work in us. We cannot read the Epistles without seeing that this Spirit is now dwelling in the Church, in a different manner and power, from any of its former works. See Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Tim. i. 14; Heb. viii. 8–12. See additional note to Matt. xix. ¶ *Abide with you for ever.* "With you till death and beyond it, for He shall not die as you will see Me die." And these words on our Saviour's lips, mean more emphatically; with you and your successors for ever, i. e., with the Church to the end of all things. See Matt. xxviii. 20. This Third Person of the Godhead, shall never again leave the Church, but, shall dwell in it as its Shechinah, the Glory of the Spiritual Temple, till it is brought home to heaven.

17. *Spirit of truth.* It is truth, for it gives the knowledge of God and unites the soul to Him; it reveals inwardly all the spiritual facts of the Church; it expels error and falsehood, removes ignorance and enlightens the soul with the joy and peace of the Gospel. This name is put forward here, lest the disciples should fall into the error of certain fanatics who afterwards

18 I will not leave you ‖comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: [a] because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

‖ Or, *orphans.*

[a] 1 Cor. 15. 20.

arose, saying that the Comforter was a visible person, some man who was to lead them. He is called a Spirit, and what mark can so distinguish Him, as that He is the author of all truth and right knowledge? See 1 Cor. ii. 9–16; xii. 3–13. ¶ *Cannot receive.* It cannot receive Him, and remain worldly. For as darkness and light cannot dwell together, so the prejudices and maxims of the natural heart are so opposed to the laws of divine grace, that they exclude the truth of the spiritual world. The reason why the heart cannot receive Him follows. ¶ *Because it seeth Him not.* It has no mind to see Him, but is carnal and opposed to works of grace. See explanation given by St. Paul, Gal. v. 17–25. "The Holy Spirit kindles in every one in whom He dwells, the desire of things invisible. And since worldly minds love only things visible, this world receiveth Him not, because it rises not to the love of things invisible."—*St. Gregory.* ¶ *Neither knoweth Him.* Neither recognizes nor believes in Him. The reason then why worldly men do not receive the Spirit, is because they will not, and so long as their wills are averse, they cannot. But as soon as they give up their love of sensual objects, they may become children of the light. 2 Cor. vi. 14. ¶ *He dwelleth with you.* In the body of the Church, not only as a personal gift to each, but as a sacred Presence binding all parts into one, a *communion* or fellowship of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. vi. 17, 19; xii. 13. ¶ *In you.* This is to mark that the Comforter shall be a Person invisible, and known by His works in the soul of man. "The Spirit itself beareth witness *with our spirits* that we are the children of God." See Rom. viii. Thus the apostles wrote of themselves in a manner totally unlike the style of their forefathers. See Acts ii. 4; viii. 29; x. 19; Phil. ii. 12. This gift was foretold by the prophets Joel and Jeremiah, as the *great gift* of the last Covenant. Joel ii. 28, 29; Jer. xxxi. 31–34.

18. *Comfortless.* Orphans. I will not leave you unprotected. They were to begin and carry on for a time His kingdom in the world. For this great work He would send them strength, protection and comfort.

19. *A little while.* This was Wednesday night. He was crucified on Friday ¶ *Seeth me no more.* After the resurrection, Jesus appeared *only* to His disciples. For the world then had no part in Him. He was spiritual and eternal. The world would see Him no more till the judgment. ¶ *Ye see Me.* Ye shall see Me when I am risen, and learn by faith that I live thenceforth for ever. ¶ *Because I live.* Because I shall be risen from the dead, and appear to you, then going into heaven to appear before God for your sakes, ye shall live also; here by faith, hereafter by the same resurrection. "His resurrection was about to take place so soon that He speaks of it as present. Theirs being deferred till the end of the world, He does not say *ye live*, but, *ye shall live.* For when we shall have attained to that life in which death is swallowed up, then shall be finished that which is now begun by Him, that He should be in us and we in Him."—*St. Augustine.*

20. *At that day.* 1. In the day of His resurrection, when this would be known in part; for the faith of the disciples would be confirmed by this proof of the love of God. 2. It will be fully known at our resurrection, when we shall put aside worldly blindness and know even as we are known. Then this union will appear in its fulness. ¶ *That I am in My Father.* That there is an entire union between the Father and Me, the Son of man and

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 [a]Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, [b]and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's, which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken

a Lu. 6. 16.

b Rev. 3. 30.

first-fruits from the dead. This union was the model of all others, and was partly by the Holy Ghost, as He was man, and so by it conceived (Lu. i. 35), and raised from the dead. Ps. ii. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 18. ¶ *Ye in Me.* You shall be united by the same Spirit to Me, in so far as your natures permit, which are now in a measure mortal and earthly. This union of the Son and Father, as both are One God, cannot be strictly applied to us. But so far as it is possible, the spiritual nature of Christ is united to ours. John vi. 54; xv. 1–7; 1 Cor. xv. 45.

21. *He that hath, &c.* This is not confined to the twelve disciples, but is made the law of grace to all Christians. Union between Christ and believers may be: 1. Union of kindred, as we are all united to the first Adam by descent Thus we are His brethren, and declared one with Him in the strongest language. 2. Union of nature, and the Spirit of Christ dwells in His followers, to sanctify them to a condition similar to that of His humanity. 3. Union of condition, so that where one is the others must follow, to which many texts may be remembered; and 4. Union of heart and soul, so that the saint becomes one with Christ by having the same Spirit, the same qualities and affections. And this latter union is effected by *love and obedience.* ¶ *Will manifest Myself to him.* By the manifestation of inward light, grace, joy and peace. "To be spiritually minded, is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6; xv. 13; xiv. 17. See v. 23.

22. *Judas.* Surnamed Thaddeus and Lebbeus, the brother of St. James. Matt. x. 3. Iscariot had gone forth on his wicked errand before this. This Jude was the author of the Epistle. As one after another of the disciples ask a question, we see each answered by instructions to all. Jude was now perplexed by these promises, and like Nicodemus would know "how can these things be!"

23. *My words.* See v. 15. This signifies all the teachings, precepts and conditions of the Christian covenant. ¶ *We will come unto him.* In a spiritual sense, will so fill his soul with the faith of sins pardoned, of Divine love and future blessings, that he shall enjoy his obedience as much as if we were present with Him, and in his sight. This presence of God is known to the Christian by faith. He repents and mourns for sin, and in the faith of the covenant of Christ finds "a peace that passeth understanding," which comes from the Spirit of God. ¶ *Make Our abode with him.* This was the form of prophesying great blessings to the Jews, used by the prophets. See Zech. viii. 3. For where God is, there is every blessing. So the presence of the Divine grace would not be for a little while, but would abide, to cause fruits of holiness to abound in the soul of the Christian.

24. *The word which ye hear.* See note ch. v. 19; vii. 16.

25. *Present with you.* "For your instruction before I leave you." It was part of the work of our Saviour on

unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 [a]Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

[a] Phil. 4, 7; Col. 3. 15.

earth that He should thoroughly prepare these twelve men for future guides of the Church. And now He concludes this work of preparation. They were as yet like men wandering in some glorious palace or temple, in the dark, who might feel here and there a pillar or buttress, but could poorly calculate its harmony and dimensions until the sun should rise and give them light. Jesus had been placing and building up gradually in their remembrance a perfect life, a perfect covenant and wisdom; but it was left for the Holy Spirit to descend in tongues of fire and ravish them with the beauties which had been lying unnoticed around them.

26. *Will send in My name.* "On account of the price paid by My redemption." This happened fifty-two days after this, on Pentecost. See Acts ii. And as the Jewish covenant dates from the first Pentecost, when the Law was given at Sinai, so the Christian dispensation truly begins in this new "royal law," written in the fleshly tables of the heart on this anniversary of the former event. ¶ *Shall teach you all things.* All spiritual things; all the Old Testament prophecies, types and shadows; all that Jesus had done and taught, and all that Providence should execute by them. This Spirit inspired them, so that they became the sure foundation of the faith, inasmuch as they preached it and propagated it, and then committed it to writing as occasion arose. ¶ *Bring all things to your remembrance.* "Will recall all the words and events of My life." The Holy Spirit was to move in harmony with their faculties, not to utter strange oracles, but to recall the things which were in their minds before, whether of their Scriptures or the life of Jesus. St. Peter's first sermon is an example of its work and of the fulfilment of this promise. See Acts ii. The same Spirit is continued in the Church, no longer to work miracles or give infallibility to individuals, but to sanctify, instruct, and save the soul. We should pray for it, to help us in the understanding of Divine things.

27. *Peace I leave with you.* A solemn form of farewell. But more than this, it is a gift to them. Jesus came to make peace in the souls of men, which were in darkness and trouble. He also reconciled them to God, and illuminated them with the joy of believing that heaven was a certain possession to the faithful. And this covenant of peace which would restore all things and fill the souls of the disciples with perfect peace, He here promises to leave with them as His parting gift. Thus He encourages them in this hour of grief and fear. ¶ *My peace.* My covenant of peace, which brings joy from sorrow for sin, and comfort in patience, and hope in suffering for God's truth. ¶ *Not as the world giveth.* 1. Not as the worldly salutation goes, which wishes peace, as a mere compliment; but it is given in deed and truth, as a real gift. 2. Or better, "I do not promise you inward peace in the ways in which worldly men seek it. It is not to be found in wealth, splendor, health, fame, or in any of those things in which you would seek it, but I give it to you in new and strange blessings, which will more certainly and fully convey it. The world promises a temporal peace, in having every thing prosperous about us. But religion gives it in purifying us for heaven by affliction, sorrow for

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and

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sins, humiliation, sufferings for others, and crucifying this world to the love of another. ¶ *Be afraid.* The Hebrew language repeated such words for the sake of emphasis. Do not be alarmed at any danger before you while I am with you. So spake the angel of the Lord to Joshua (see Josh. i. 9), when about to go into a land of enemies without the leader Moses whom he had hitherto followed.

28. *For My Father is greater than I.* This is not a comparison of the nature of the Father and Son, as they are God, but of God—whom all called Father—and the Mediator. For as Jesus by His death was to reconcile God and man, so it was expedient that He should ascend to God and announce that death, so that the souls of men should be committed to Him, inasmuch as He was both God and man, and so Mediator between them. And as man, God was greater than He, and would bestow this salvation on Him, as a Benefactor of others. Hence the disciples had reason to rejoice that Jesus should leave them to make way for another Comforter, who could not come until He had gone. "Who that loves Christ will not rejoice at this, seeing as He doth, his own nature immortal in Christ, and hoping that he himself will be so by Christ."—*St. Chrysostom.*

29. *Before it come to pass.* Before My ascension. This verse shows us that these instructions were prophetic. And this prophetic teaching, as it shows Jesus to have been possessed of supernatural knowledge, confirms His words. But St. John brings into view the fact that Jesus was building up the forms of Church doctrine in their hearts, in anticipation of the Holy Ghost. ¶ *When it is come to pass.* "When the Holy Ghost has actually taken up His dwelling in the Church, in My absence."

30. *Will not talk much.* "My instructions are nearly ended, and the Gospel system is now completely revealed. I shall add a little hereafter, but little that is new." He was crucified two days after this, and after His resurrection the instructions He gave seem to have been mostly explanations of the prophecies of the Old Testament, or promises of grace to fit them for their work. ¶ *Prince of this world.* The devil, then busy in person with the Sanhedrim. See note, ch. xii. 31. ¶ *Cometh.* That is, in his servants, the "powers that be" of Jerusalem. Jesus seeing the spiritual world as plainly as the human, spake of the causes of things just as we do of the visible agencies. ¶ *Hath nothing in Me.* Hath no power over Me, from any sinful feeling or act in Me. The devil has "the power of death." Heb. ii. 14. It is the wages of sin, and inflicted as a curse upon a race of sinners. All other men are under its power because of their sins. But in Jesus there was no sin, and hence He was not a debtor to death. Satan came to bring upon Him the death of the cross, but should find in Him no yielding to temptation and no proper cause of death. The death of this second Adam was therefore in every sense *voluntary.* It was not deserved, it was contrary to the purity of His nature, it was violent, but willingly endured for the good of others.

31. *That the world may know.* "Not because the accuser can find in Me any cause of death, but for the instruction of the world, and the example of per-

[c]as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

a Phil. 2. 8; He. 5. 8. *b* 1 Cor. 3. 11, 23. *c* Mat. 15. 13.

CHAPTER XV.

THURSDAY.

I AM the true [b]vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 [c]Every branch in me that

fect obedience to God's will even to death, I submit." In Him was no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. He had the innocence in which Adam had been created. "But being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil. ii. 8. He was therefore a sacrifice for sins, the just for the unjust, an instructor of righteousness, to the end that men should learn the way of life. ¶ *So I do.* "I fulfil the work which I came on earth to perform, obedience perfected to the last extremity of pain." God had foreordained this mode of salvation for mankind, and now that the bitterest portion came, though His human nature quailed before it, He was determined to finish all things. He taught afterwards that "Christ ought to have suffered these things," according to ancient prophecy. Lu. xxiv. 26. And to this predetermined will of God, He rendered entire acquiescence. ¶ *Arise, &c.* This concludes the account of the *Wednesday of Passion Week.* Jesus and His disciples retired from the room where they had supped. He probably spent the night in solitary meditation and prayer according to His custom.

CHAPTER XV.

THURSDAY EVENING. Here occur the narratives of St. Matthew xxvi. 17–25; St. Mark xiv. 12–21; St. Luke xxii. 7–23.

1. *I am the true vine.* "The Jewish nation is now no longer the Lord's vine, by which men shall be nourished, as the prophets loved to sing of it, but I have now abrogated her covenant, and by me alone men must henceforth seek God." The figure of a vine was common in the Old Testament, to signify the glorious privileges of the Jews, and especially that they were in covenant with the Lord. Ps. lxxx. 8–16; Isa. v. 1–7. Hence our Lord condemns that former covenant, which was a shadow of Himself, and now appears as the source of all religious union with the Divine Being. This conversation seems to have occurred at the close of the Pascal supper on Thursday evening, just as the third cup of wine was drank. At this time He probably uttered the words of the two chapters following this. The word *true* is opposed to the shadowy or typical covenant of Moses, which could "never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Heb. x. 1. But as a true vine of the Lord's planting, this New Covenant is perfect in all its parts, and gives way to no other yet to appear. ¶ *My father is the husbandman.* As the farmer cultivates the vine of his choice, and selects his fruit from it for his joy and gladness, so by this beautiful imagery, which was most striking in a land of "vines and oil olive," the Divine Being is represented as cherishing the Christian vine, the New Covenant made in Christ. The Saviour is the source of the new life. He is called the trunk: the members of the Church, the branches, are united to Him, draw all their life and hope from Him, and according as they are faithful or not, receive blessing or punishment. "He says this as being Head of the Church of which we are members, the Man Christ Jesus; for the vine and the branches are of the same nature. He is only called a vine metaphorically, not literally; but He distinguishes Himself from that vine to whom it is said, 'How art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me,' Jer. xi. 21."—*St. Augustine.*

2. *Every branch in Me.* Every vinedresser removes the branches which fail to bear fruit from any cause, though

beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are [a]clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide [b]in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the

a Ch. 13. 10; Eph. 5. 26; 1 Pe. 1. 22.

b Col. 1. 23; 1 Jo. 2. 6.

often those branches are vigorous to look upon and covered with broad leaves. So the figure applies to the discipline of Church members. They are tested by an All-seeing eye, whether they are fruitful or not. If they are indolent, worldly, cowardly, or sinful, no matter how verbose and ready they are with external religion, the God who rules the Church, sees the fatal failure, *the what of fruit*, and cuts them off from the Head. Thus our Lord gives us the same idea under the image of a fig-tree (St. Lu. xiii. 6–9), and St. Paul, of barren soil. Heb. vi. 4–8. That sap which is the spiritual life, is the true faith in Christ, and love for Him, preserved by obedience to all His commands, by union with His Church, and by all the graces of the Holy Spirit. ¶ *He taketh away.* The figure requires us to think of the vine-dresser removing the rejected branches, and burning them. But the thing represented must bear another construction: for we read in other portions of Scripture that the unfruitful and wicked members of the Church are allowed to remain often undistinguished to the careless eye, till the great vintage of the last day. Matt. xiii. 30, 41, 42. So that we are to refer the words *taketh away*, not merely to modes of discipline here on this earth, but also to that last excision, when the useless branches will be burned. God gives power to the Church to cut off offending members, and often removes them Himself; by suffering their sins to appear and shame them; by their fall into self-willed schisms, and by death. For His eye sees the heart and knows all who are fruitless Christians, while human eyes would fail to tell always the good from the bad. At last all the false, hypocritic professors of religion will be given to the everlasting burning.

¶ *Every branch that beareth fruit.* Every true Christian who comes up to the words of the covenant of grace, and shows the life of the Spirit in him. Gal. v. 22. ¶ *He purgeth it.* Some explain this, He prunes it; a meaning properly inferred from the words. But the Greek word signifies to *purify*, or make clean, and refers to all the modes of cleansing a branch of vermin, rust, dust, &c., which are common in vine-growing countries. This is done that the branch may be healthy, vigorous and beautiful. So when one seeks to serve God truly, He condescends to meet him, grafts him into the body of the Church, subjects him to careful inspection, assists his feeble efforts after fruit unto holiness, and purifies him from earthly defilements and canker, by gentle blessings, like showers, by dews of the Holy Spirit, or if need be by the knife of severe affliction, or the cautery of a hot rebuke. By this elegant language we see the Lord of all bending as it were over the young shoots of desire in the soul, cherishing it, and purifying it to His use: and we should learn in the good thereby produced to ourselves, and the whole vine by our trials, to bear them in loving patience.

3. *Now are ye clean.* Now are ye *purged*, for the original word is the same. "You my disciples have been thus lovingly led and made vigorous and sound in faith, by My care over you." The Jew understood by the word *clean*, not perfection, but such purity as was consistent with this life; and such is the meaning here. The disciples were *docile*, and would yet be brave Christians, but as yet they did not understand so simple a thing as what rising from the dead could mean. But their hearts had been disciplined to wait in faith for the Master's command, and then to obey it as they understood it. ¶ *Through the word.*

vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, [a]the same bringeth forth much fruit: for [‖]without me ye can do nothing.

a Ph. 1. 11; & 4. 13. ‖ Or, *severed from me.*

6 If [b]a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask

b Mat. 3. 10; & 7. 19.

By all His teachings, which formed one whole system of discipline, and so were termed a *word*.

4. *Abide in me.* "Continue in the faith and holiness which I have taught, and you shall receive the proof of My presence with you, in the increase of the graces of the Spirit." As St. Paul afterwards exhorted the Colossians (chap. ii. 67): "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." ¶ *And I in you.* I will give you proof of My presence with you. This promise was demonstrated to them by visible effects of power in prophecy, inspiration and miracles, not merely for their conviction, but as examples to all Christians. For the Spirit of the Lord now truly abides in us who love and obey Him, to effect our salvation. For without Him nothing is strong, nothing is holy. And we have confidence, and "all riches of full assurance of understanding," that while we labor to abide in Christ, He is with us, to make us faithful and holy.

5. *Without Me ye can do nothing.* The Apostles never offered to do any thing, but in the name of Christ. Said St. Peter to the lame man at the Temple, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Thus did they all. So St. Paul: "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." Phil. iv. 13. And no Christian but echoes this faith, and confesses his humility before God. For as a body separate from the head is lifeless, so the Christian, who seeks to walk by his own strength and wisdom, without prayer to God for strength, and reliance on the will of God as it is revealed in the Gospel covenant, is certain to lose the life of faith and the comfort of "a reasonable religious and holy hope."

6. *Abide not in Me.* It is not sufficient to begin a Christian life well, but we must persevere to the end; for the branch that is truly grafted into the vine and has begun to live, may yet wither and decay. Our Lord taught nothing of the vain philosophy which sometimes usurps the name of evangelical, and offers consolations to a proud heart. No one has reason to hope for safety, who has only the past to rely on, without a good hope through grace then present in him. A man may now be to all intents a believer, but may fall from the faith and be lost. While we live we are members of the true vine; while we have only a name to live, we may have the form of godliness, but have not the power thereof. ¶ *Is withered.* Is sapless and dry; who can graft it in again? A fallen soul *may*, as we charitably believe, "be renewed again unto repentance," but St. Paul's sixth chapter to the Hebrews, is a fearful note of warning to us, to beware how we tamper with the Divine life of the soul. His "impossible," there, is ominous. And St. John tells of "a sin unto death," which is beyond even his allowance of charitable prayer. 1 John v. 16. ¶ *Men gather them, &c.* As men gather the dead limbs of the vine for fire-wood, or to get rid of them as useless, so shall the angels gather the wicked at the last day, for eternal destruction in hell. Matt. xiii. 40–42. And how many will then be among that number, who once leaned on some other hope than a constant resolution "to purify themselves as Christ is

what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

pure?" How many have been seduced into vain deceits by the traditions of men and sectarian doctrines, who would not receive the warnings of God in simplicity!

7. *My words.* Commandments, which are the conditions of the Christian covenant. ¶ *Abide in you.* Unless the teaching of Christ, as it is contained in the Scripture, and it is not grievous nor hard to be understood, remain in the heart and regulate the whole life, then the very prayers of the professed believer become vain. But while a lively sense of His teachings is in us, making us righteous, pure, loving, then all the petitions of the soul are acceptable. For then they can claim the promises which are made to prayer, and which are expressed by them in submission to the will of God. See the elegant use made by St. James of the example of Elias, to teach the power of the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man." Epis. v. 16–18. ¶ *What ye will.* All things, which My words shall teach you to pray for. This does not jar with any true notion of the power of prayer. One who has the words of Jesus abiding in him, is in harmony with himself and submissive to the will of God. He asks therefore only such things as the Spirit teaches him to desire. He may wish wealth, ease, prosperity, as his carnal heart prompts him, and even venture to pray for them, but as a Christian he knows that these things are better left with Him who promises that "all things shall work together for good to them that love Him;" and he learns to hunger and thirst in prayer after righteousness, and is filled. St. Paul asked relief from a thorn in the flesh, but received "grace sufficient for him" instead, and learned to bless the hand that guided him. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

8. *Glorified.* Religion is not merely an abstraction, but a reality in the daily life of the world. Men honor a physician, not for what he says he can do, but for the actual cures which he effects; and the Saviour attests His power and the glory of God, in curing the souls of men, and making them pure and holy. Every one thus cured of sin may give Him glory and cause joy in heaven by a penitent and godly life. ¶ *Bear much fruit.* Not merely fruit enough to be saved from rejection, but *much* fruit, "labors more abundant." Some men are like the grain which bore thirty fold and was gathered into the barn, and again others bear "an hundred fold," and receive "a more abundant entrance into the kingdom," and shine as the stars for ever and ever. We sometimes feel a lingering selfishness in piety, as if there were a limit where we may safely stop. But religion is spread and God glorified, by those who put down such feelings, and determine to do all in their power, and give all to the glory of God. What had we been if St. Paul had said, "I will stop here, I conceive myself an elect believer. Why wear out my life in the service of others!" And many a poor heathen has glorified God, at the sight of men who gave up all things, not that they might save only their own souls, but that they might bear much fruit in saving others. ¶ *So shall ye be My disciples.* "So shall ye manifest the spirit of My teachings, and show that ye have truly learned of Me." It shows us how we ought to have the Spirit of Christ in all things. As He laid down His life for us, so ought we to lay down our lives for the brethren, as many are doing, who are wearing them out in the labor and poverty of the ministry. And it is not enough to be harmless, and secluded from this evil world; we must seek to do good, to give up our own ease and comfort for the sake of Christ, when we can do good to others. When we have gained one grace, we should press on to meet the providence which leads us to gain

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

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others. There is a golden chain of graces which St. Peter has held up to our eyes; we may well seek to gain it wholly (2 Pet. i. 5–8), that we may "not be barren nor unfruitful."

9. *As the Father hath loved Me.* "As God hath loved Me, in the time of My Incarnation and pure life as the Mediator for man." For He rather signifies that Divine love, which followed His earthly life, than that intimate union of the Father and Son. The latter hardly admits of this comparison: the former does admit it. This is a love which they had seen shown Him, by many signs. "This does not prove that our nature is equal to His, as His is to the Father's, but the grace whereby He is the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." —*St. Augustine.* ¶ *So have I loved you.* With the same tenderness and care. Jesus had proved His pure love for them in every way, and now winningly urges it upon them as a reason for their fidelity. For love alone can win love. "We love God *because* He first loved us." And doubtless every disciple felt a depth of tenderness to the Saviour, from the communion which they had enjoyed with Him in His life on earth. So may we meditate of His life, until we are come to be like Him, and have an abiding sense of His love to us, warming our hearts to greater and more grateful affection. ¶ *Continue ye in my love.* As He had before exhorted them to abide in faith (v. 4) and in obedience (v. 7), so now He urges them to keep alive in their hearts that inward principle, by which the rest is made perfect. A Christian may be true, yet granite-like; a man of doctrine and faith, a beacon and defence to others, but repulsive and cold. He may be obedient, as his peculiar mark, and be an example to the weak and erring: but he is a shining light only when, added to these, he is most lovable for a warmth of love flowing through and vivifying all the rest of his character. There "abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

10. See ch. xiv. 23, 24.

11. *These things.* These comforting promises, contained in this chapter, concerning the love which God had for them and the coming of the Spirit of truth, with the precepts to love one another, and continue grafted and growing in the true vine. ¶ *My joy might remain in you.* This may mean, that the joy which Christ had given them by His presence with them, should still be theirs, as He would be still spiritually present with them; or better, that they should continue faithful to Him and so give Him the same joy in them which He had before felt. Both kinds of spiritual joy are excited by the faithful obedience of the Christian. He joys in the Lord who gives him grace, and he increases the blessedness of the Saviour, who rejoices over His true servants. See ch. xvii. 13. ¶ *Your joy might be full.* That it may be made perfect, casting out fear and grief. Not only should these promises of grace give them comfort in His brief absence (which it would have done more evidently if they had continued steadfast), but they would afterward so strengthen the disciples in the faith, that their trust in Him should be entire, when they saw that He had provided all things beforehand for their blessedness; and their love for Him be complete, when they had reached the perfect spiritual peace of confirmed Christians. "This joy we rightly call our own which is begun in the faith of them who are born again, and shall be fulfilled in the reward of them who rise again."—*St. Augustine.*

12 This is my [a]commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man [b]lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; [c]for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

a 1 Thes. 4. 9; 1 Jno. 3. 11; & 4. 21. *b* Ro. 5. 7, 8; Eph. 5. 2.

c Ch. 17. 26.

12. *My commandment.* "This is the one command, which shall make up the Christian Decalogue, called by peculiar propriety *Mine.*" See ch. xiii. 34. ¶ *As I have loved you.* "As I have bound your love by no self-willed limit, but by this example, as I have loved you, even to laying down My life for you." 1 John iii. 16. Nothing but such a model as this can lay the broad foundation of this perfect law, or can conquer the selfishness of our fallen nature.

13. *Greater love than this, &c.* And yet our Lord gave His life for His enemies. Rom. v. 10. There is no reach of imagination which can give us a more perfect model of what Christian love should be, than the atonement of Christ. He beheld a world of sinners, infinitely beneath Him, wicked, wandering, defiled. He became a man with them, and selected a few frail men of the number to become His friends. He suffered here every trial, and gave His life up in agony to save them. Now, this model is made the rule of our love for each other; not that we can reach it, any more than we can be perfect or merciful as God is, but that all selfishness and self-will may be for ever silenced in the Christian Church. With our eyes fixed on this example, we can offer no excuse for coldness in zeal for the good of our brethren.

15. *Henceforth.* "After a little you are to be exalted from your present condition of pious Jews and attentive disciples, to higher privileges and to the communion of the Spirit." This was done at Pentecost. ¶ *Not servants.* As before. See Matt. x. 24, 25; John xii. 26. Not that Jesus made much of the mere name which they bore, but He marks by this a higher life as before them. "Heretofore you have been learners, following Me in meekness, wondering at much that you have heard, and perplexed at the simplest Christian doctrine. But after a little you shall have an infallible Guide, 'witnessing with your spirits' that you are the sons of God." The disciples were still *under the law*, i. e. *Jews*, in all senses. And that state was one of servitude, when compared with "the liberty wherewith Christ made them free" by His death. Rom. viii. 15; Gal. ii. 4; iv. 9–24. And this change of state by evangelical regeneration the following words indicate. ¶ *The servant knoweth not, &c.* Before this the disciples had been obedient to Christ without that spiritual insight into His work of salvation, which now marks the common Christian. They had been accepted by Him as obedient. But when the Spirit had given them light into the evangelical system, they would act by a loftier nature and serve Christ intelligently, with a full sense of the end of their work in the spiritual salvation of men. This communication of the reasons of His spiritual work, and of His intention of conferring on them the gift of the Spirit, had now begun, and he declares this new life to be close at hand. ¶ *I have called you friends.* "I have just termed you friends (verse 14), because your state of discipleship is now at an end. Your future life will be far different." ¶ *For all things, &c.* "All the doctrines and mysteries of pure truth and salvation, I have now revealed to you." This no

16 Ye have not chosen me, [a]but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye [b]know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

a 1 Jno. 4. 10.

b 1 Jno. 3. 1, 13.

one does to a servant; but Christ had now completed that primary instruction of His disciples, had given to the keeping of their memories all the forms of sound doctrine, and prepared them to become true Apostles at a future day. The language of the whole Old Testament is, "My *servants* the prophets;" of the epistles in the New Testament is, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." ¶ *That I have heard.* "That system of doctrine which I have received as Mediator." For this *hearing* refers to His commission as a Saviour. As God He had no need to hear, for Himself knew all things. As man he was sent by God with a special command, which He says He heard, i. e., received from the Father. See ch. iii. 32; viii. 26.

16. *Ye have not chosen me.* "You did not first see the object of My coming and the certainty of salvation by Me, and so come to Me and choose Me as your guide." The word *choose* signifies to elect, and is sometimes so rendered. Mark xiii. 20; Matt. xxiv. 22, 24. Here it signifies that choice of them to be disciples and friends, as we see from the remaining words of the verse. ¶ *I have chosen you.* "When you were fishermen, publicans and worldly men, I saw in you fit instruments for My work, and called you to become disciples. Above all when you were sinners I brought you in hearing of the wisdom which can save you." They might have refused to follow to the end as Judas did. And there is no election of us, which is irresistible. We can do no good thing, that is, nothing that can merit any gift from God. Hence his salvation is a free gift; the merit of it is all in Christ. But it comes down to our infirmity, and with grace preventing us in all the promises, gives us the free choice of salvation. If we receive it the Spirit at once prevents, i. e., goes before to aid the weakness of our hearts, and strengthens our infirmity to give us a good will. If we refuse it, the grace passes us by to find others who are more willing and worthy. ¶ *Ordained you.* Set you apart, or have planted you. Not by imposition of hands, for He was still present with them. Imposition of hands is the sign of the reception of the Spirit by the one thus pointed out with prayer. It was practised as soon as Jesus was absent, and the Spirit was given. The apostolic ordination was by miracle (Acts ii.), as also St. Paul's. Acts ix. 6, 15. ¶ *Bring forth fruit.* v. 5. ¶ *Your fruit should remain.* That it should not fail, as untimely grapes. The fruit, or labors and graces of the Apostles remain in two senses. 1. For their personal safety. They are like fruit gathered into the repository. Their graces abide for ever; their crowns of righteousness are kept in store for them to the great day of rejoicing, and thus every Christian looks to His reward in the eternal and exceeding weight of glory. 2. As those labors established and those graces edified the Church. Thus their works are still felt in all the world. They are the twelve goodly foundations of our Church, and their graces are the heritage of Christians. And for this fruit of theirs Jesus chose them to go in and out with Him as His friends. ¶ *That whatsoever, &c.* See v. 7. Here the promise seems to have a personal application, limited to them as the founders of the Church.

18. *If the world hate you.* He will not have them in ignorance of the hostility which they were to meet from wicked men, as His apostles. From the day that St. Peter preached his sermon to the crowds of Jerusalem, the cease-

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, [a]therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, [b]The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but [c]now they have no [‖] cloak for their sin.

a Ch. 17. 14; 1 Jno. 4. 5. *b* Mat. 10. 24; Lu. 6. 40; Ch. 13. 16.

c Jas. 4. 17. ‖ Or, *excuse.*

less hatred of the world followed them; sometimes powerless, but often breaking out into bitter persecution. And this hatred we now see to have been natural, inevitable. For wicked men and devils were leagued to put down the true religion, which disturbed them in their sins and limited their evil desires. The world is the same yet, and "its friendship is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." James iv. 4. ¶ *Know, &c.* Remember, keep in mind. It was hard for them to believe this, but a few days more would convince them.

19. *If ye were of the world.* If you were idolaters, carnal and sinners like the rest, they would not trouble you. Philosophers in the heathen world and scribes in the Jewish, were all children of this world and wise in their generation. They were obliging to the sins of men; they only talked of great virtues, and compromised cunningly with vices. They, therefore, lived in peace. ¶ *Ye are not of the world.* They were of a different cast, and it was plain to them as to the world, that one party must be put down, that like light and darkness there could not be room for both of them in the same place at once. The true Christian feels still the same warfare in himself, the truth warring with the false and carnal nature, the faith against the world. ¶ *I have chosen you out of the world.* Not only chosen, but so taught you, that you are now become different men. ¶ *Therefore, &c.* There is need of caution and discretion in reading such words as these in this day. For fanatics, who are justly punished for their personal faults and follies, are fond of laying their punishment to the account of their piety, as some did in St Peter's day. 1 Peter ii. 20; iv. 15, 16. True piety may be and often is unnoticed and undisturbed in the indifference of this age, but it may still be as opposite to the world, as if it were tried in the fire of the early persecutions.

20. *Remember, &c.* Recorded by St. Matthew x. 24, 25.

21. *My name's sake.* Because you are Christians. See note xiv. 13. ¶ *Because they know not Him, &c.* "They do not know Him with a right knowledge: therefore they do not believe that God sent Me." This was the chief ground of Jewish hatred to the Apostles, that they taught that Jesus was sent by God. Acts iv. 17. And when they would not be silenced by threats and punishments, then the hatred of their own nation raged against them. Afterwards the heathen world rose against them as hateful to all men, because they taught that there is only one God and Saviour, and therefore their numerous idols and philosophies were vain.

22. *If I had not come, &c.* If Jesus had not appeared to offer them the covenant of grace, they would not have been the sinners they became, though as one of His own parables shows they would still have been wicked husbandmen in the Lord's vineyard. Matt. xxi. 33–41. Superior privileges increase responsibility and sin if it is despised. The Jews became reprobate after they had reject-

23 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, [a]they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But *this cometh to pass,*

a Lu. 10. 13; Ch. 9. 41.

that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, [b]They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the [c]Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

b Ps. 35. 19; & 69. 4. *c* Lu. 24. 49; Ch. 14. 17, 26; & 16. 7, 13; Ac. 2. 33.

ed their king. ¶ *Not had sin.* Namely this sin of rejecting the Messiah, and so becoming accursed by God and outrageous in their reprobate hardness of heart against the truth. The history of the nation shows them to have been a sinful people in all ages, killing their prophets and slaying them who were sent by God to them; but after they had rejected the Messiah, and refused the full offers of salvation, despising the wisdom of God in their pride, their house was left unto them *desolate;* the Spirit of grace withdrew from their covenant, and they became bloodthirsty, desperate, hating and hateful. ¶ *No cloak for their sin.* No excuse with which to cover their wickedness. Their sin began in the righteous blood shed long before, when they refused their prophets. Now the King's Son is sent to them to see if they will reverence Him, but they kill Him, and their rebellion is complete. Comp. Matt. xxiii. 34-39.

24. *Which none other man did.* The miracles of Jesus were innumerable. See John xxi. 25. They surpassed all that are recorded in the Old Testament in kind and degree, and all that pagan impudence or cunning dared to feign. But they had been as water poured upon the ground, to the Jewish nation. The Jews had seen the power of God and the marks of true mission in Jesus, but, from the conviction of their minds, without the assent of their hearts, they had changed from indifference to hatred. To see God and not obey Him, is to become hardened in sin. To receive means of grace as the world now does, and not improve them, is to become callous and stupid to all the appeals of the Gospel. ¶ *Hated both Me, &c.* See ch. v. 19, 20; xiv. 7, 9.

25. *In their law.* Ps. xxxv. 19. See note, ch. x. 34. The law is used as a name for their entire Scriptures. ¶ *Without a cause.* Without any cause or blame in Jesus. He was in no way to blame. They were as perverse as they were wicked. Thus He shows the disciples that even these untoward events were not unexpected, but had been prefigured in their Scriptures. And when we know that a superior has foreseen a danger or trouble, yet for the sake of greater good has brought us into it, we can bear it patiently. The voyage of the disciples was to be rough, over a stormy sea, with gales, not of gentle prosperity, but of persecutions; yet God had marked out their course through it all, and gave them assurance that it would lead them to the haven where they would be.

26. *I will send unto you.* Here it is plain that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, and is sent by the Son. St. Paul (Gal. iv. 6) says: "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts." From these and other such passages, we are taught to say in the creed, "And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son." ¶ *He shall testify of Me.* "He shall prove Me to be a Saviour, by miracles, prophecy, inspiration at the first, afterwards by the light of true piety in the Church." Thus is a double witness carried on through all time of the Spirit; 1st, within us, giving life and sanctification to the Church; and 2d, the ministry, a visible carrying on of the work of

27 And ye also shall bear witness, [a]because ye have been with me from the beginning.

CHAPTER XVI.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, [b]that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, [c]because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told

a 2 Pe. 1. 16.

b Ac. 26. 9–11; Ro. 10. 2, 3. *c* 1 Cor. 2. 8.

the Gospel in them, as the ambassadors of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Acts xv. 3.

27. *Ye shall bear witness.* Comp. Acts i. 21, 22. First by plain setting forth of the facts of the life and death of Christ, which they had seen and known, by the word of mouth; then by committing them to faithful men who should teach others also, and again by their inspired writings. ¶ *From the beginning.* Since their call to become disciples, some three years before this.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *These things.* These forewarnings concerning the obstinacy and hatred of the Jews, and afterward of the pagan world, had been given lest their hearts should fail them, if such things came upon them unexpectedly. See ch. xv. 18–23. ¶ *Be offended.* Stumble or fall away from the faith. This the disciples did at first, for when Jesus yielded to the midnight mob, they all forsook Him and fled. For at that time they were destitute of that inner help and illumination of the Holy Ghost, which they afterwards received. When that help came they dared all things for Christ, and seeing their way clear by its aid, they held fast the profession of their faith, without wavering. We learn from this the frailty of man without the aid of Divine grace, the strength of the Christian with it. And again we learn that however our trials may seem strange or unlooked for, they do not spring from the ground, but have over them the guiding hand of an omniscient and tender Saviour. They may discipline, purify and save us, but cannot crush us.

2. *Out of the synagogue.* See note, ch. ix. 22. It was a terror to the disciples, who were still Jews, to be cut off from the commonwealth of Israel, and covenant of promise. See Acts vi. 13, 14; ix. 23, 24; xvii. 5; xxi. 27–31. ¶ *Whosoever killeth you.* "So hated and accursed will you seem in the eyes of Jews and pagans." Saul of Tarsus in Judea, manifested this spirit. Acts viii. 1, 3; ix. 1; 1 Tim. i. 13. Tacitus expressed the pagan sentiment when he declared the Christians hated of all mankind. For as Christianity would make no compromise with the Jewish system of its age, as a means of salvation, but held up Christ alone, the Jews religiously hated it. As it declared that there was only one God, and could be but one worship, thus destroying idols and images, the heathen visited upon the Christians all the wrath of ignorant superstition. Acts xix. 26, 28. Thus the early Christians had before them the bitterest of human trials, the universal public opinion, and religious odium of men. All men considered them to be men "turning the world upside down," agitators, reformers, haters of the gods, despisers of Moses, offensive to God. And when we study their examples, and see their calm reliance on God, we may learn to disregard the smaller trials which may now be ours, from the foolish and unreasonable cavils of men. Then the world had a show of reason. This religion was new, and must triumph by completely overthrowing all others. Now, the truth and usefulness of Christianity is beyond dispute. ¶ *God service.* Do what will be pleasing to God, and useful to religion.

3. See ch. xv. 21.

4. *When the time shall come.* The time when they turn you out of the syna-

you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I [a]go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, [b]I will send him unto you.

a Ch. 14. 28. *b* Ch. 7. 39; Eph. 4. 8.

gogues, and persecute you. ¶ *Ye may remember.* "You will then recall these My sayings, which you now only partly appreciate, and then fully understand them, and be encouraged to have patience till the end." It was in their memory that Jesus stored up these proofs of His care and foreknowledge, and thus gave them a chart of their future course over the waves of a troubled world, in which, but for these proofs of His love, they would have been of all men the most miserable. 1 Cor. xv. 19. And every Christian has need of patience after he has done the will of God that he may endure till he receives the promise. The words of Scripture, often heard but little felt in times of peace, will come to his remembrance, and cheer his heart in days of heaviness and trouble. ¶ *At the beginning.* "In the earlier part of our connection, for I had other things to teach you, and could myself protect you from dangers of every kind.' Our Lord's instructions began in His teaching the multitudes after the manner of the Sermon on the Mount. Then He unfolded doctrines in parables, in them especially teaching the disciples the similitudes of His spiritual kingdom. Next, He spake to them more plainly, as St. John records His words. And only on His last journey to Jerusalem did He openly announce His own death, and now at the last, just before that event, He foretells their future troubles. For first they must have faith in Him as sent from God to help them before they could receive and bear the rest. ¶ *I was with you.* During that time He received all the hostile attacks of men against Himself, and they were safe. He was the shepherd, they the flock; while the shepherd was present the flock had no need of self-guidance. But now they were to go forth, to all outward seeming alone, on their future course. He had told them of trials even at the first (Matt. v. 10–12), but not with the exactness of these words, for His instructions followed a natural and useful method.

5, 6. *Now I go My way.* I depart, a gentler mode of expressing death, for His death was not a curse for any sin of His own, nor was it forced upon Him. He went to it, as a traveller to a journey. ¶ *None of you asketh Me.* Partly sorrow filled their hearts, and partly perplexity. For it is difficult to conceive how far they understood Jesus in His words concerning His death, and how far they looked upon them as a strange state of depression in their Teacher. But they had not at this time questioned Jesus in earnest about His departure, as those who had no doubt of its approach. See ch. xiii. 36; xiv. 5.

7. *It is expedient for you.* It is the Divine pleasure for your salvation, that I should depart, and the Holy Spirit come visibly, to supply My place. For, as the Epistles teach us, which were written in the full wisdom inspired by this Holy Ghost, there was this predetermined order to spiritual salvation. God sent the Son. The Son paid the price in His perfect obedience: the Holy Ghost was given as the reward of His death, and the applier of salvation. In the Old Covenant, was the presence of God in the secret temple. In Jesus it

8 And when he is come, he will ‖ reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, [a] because they believe not on me;

‖ Or, *convince.* [a] Ac. 2. 22–37.

was in one man speaking, sacred wisdom. In the Christian Church it is in the whole body of the faithful. In the Old Covenant God spake as a Lawgiver "Thou shalt not." In Jesus as a teacher, to persuade men to believe. In the Christian Church, in the hearts or spirits of men, not only to command and persuade, but to energize and help. In the Old Testament, the soul was in the covenant by natural birth and circumcision, in the New by the *new-birth.* And as under all previous covenants man had failed by His own natural powers to please God, so was it declared, as the very condition of the new, that "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." A man is born again not by law, or Moses would have given this, nor by teaching and example, or Jesus would have conferred it once, but by the Holy Ghost, as it has wrought inwardly in all Christians, since its descent at Pentecost. Therefore, as this spiritual change to new creatures, this illumination and inward strength could come only by that Indwelling Spirit, it was expedient that Jesus should depart and that they should pass through this change. ¶ *Comforter.* See note, ch. xiv. 16. ¶ *If I depart.* See Acts ii. 32; Eph. iv. 8; John vii. 39.

8. *When he is come.* "At the day of Pentecost, into your hearts, and has filled you with all spiritual wisdom, then these following kinds of knowledge will be made manifest." ¶ *Will reprove.* The original word in the Hebrew use of it signifies, to *convince*, or *demonstrate*, in which sense it can be applied to each member of this sentence. For who would say, to reprove or convict of righteousness, that word belonging properly to crimes. The learned Dr. Hammond, after Grotius and Val. Schindler, has an exposition of this difficult passage, which seems satisfactory. He believes the words to be legal, or forensic. He states that there were three sorts of causes tried before the Jewish tribunals. 1. *Public judgments concerning sin*, trying criminals, offenders against God, &c. 2. *Concerning justice or righteousness*, the defending the innocent from oppression. 3. *Concerning judgment.* Pleading against any for trespass, robbery, and urging the law of retaliation. He urges that the office of the Paraclete was to plead the cause of Jesus as a *Public Advocate*, and to try these three questions which follow, with the world on the other side, as accuser. 1. One action He should put in against the world, was, *concerning sin*, whether Christ were a false prophet, which would be decided by the truth of the very prophecy of the coming of this Advocate. 2. Another action, *concerning righteousness*; to vindicate the innocence of Christ, by convincing men that He had gone to the Father. 3. A third action, *concerning judgment*, or punishing injurious persons, by way of retaliation, was wrought most discernibly on Satan, whose kingdom was destroyed and his power limited. *See Dr. Hammond on this verse.* Others again read it, that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict the world as guilty of sin, and especially of unbelief in Christ; and convince it of the truth of righteousness established by Christ who has gone to His Father in heaven, in order to make it effectual; and of the certainty of a future judgment, when the kingdom of Satan will be condemned. When both interpretations seem to be true and equally worthy of the speaker, we are permitted to choose the one which seems satisfactory to our own judgments, without condemning the other.

9. *Of sin.* The Spirit of God convicted the world of sin, at first, when it prompted the unanswerable arguments of St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles. "Him—ye have taken and by

10 Of [a]righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

a Ro. 8. 10, 13.

11 Of [b]judgment, because the prince [c]of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to

b Ac. 17. 30, 31. *c* Col. 2. 15; He. 2. 14.

wicked hands have crucified and slain." "Now when they heard, this they were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter, &c." Acts ii. 23, 37; compare Acts iii. 14, 15; and iv. 2, 10, 14. This especial charge was, "Jesus whom ye crucified," and the cause thereof was unbelief in Him as their Messiah. Since then the same Spirit, by means of the inspired writings of the Apostles and the preaching of their successors, has "concluded all men in unbelief" (Rom. xi. 32; iii. 23), has brought home the conviction of sin to the consciences of myriads, has rendered them without excuse, and either put them to shame or led them to repentance and good works. And the same cause is still made out against unbelief and aversion to holiness, and the covenant as made in Christ Jesus. For the same wicked heart of unbelief, which led the Israelites to fall in the wilderness and the Jews to crucify the Lord, now rules in all the children of disobedience. The first step of the new birth, is the faith which cometh by hearing the word of God, with earnestness to obey it with all the heart. ¶ *Believe not in Me.* The Jews believed not on Him as their Messiah, others, as their king, because they love darkness rather than light, and again because their deeds are evil. John iii 19.

10. *Of righteousness.* According to Dr. Hammond and Grotius, this was the office of the Holy Ghost, to demonstrate the innocence of Jesus, against His wicked accusers. This subject was the chief element in the first discourses of the Apostles. Acts ii. 22; iii. 14; iv. 11, 12. Or it is equally His office to throw perfect light upon the way of righteousness leading to that presence of God, whither Jesus has gone. It is the light that now shineth, the light that Christ gives to all who awake and arise from the dead. It gives knowledge to salvation to all who desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. ¶ *Because I go to My Father.* If Jesus of Nazareth was carried thither, as we believe, then His innocence is perfect, His power infinite in spiritual things. And while He ever liveth to make intercession, we have an advocate, who has power to justify us and clothe us in the robes of pure righteousness, while His Spirit here witnesses to our spirits that we are the sons of God. ¶ *Ye see Me no more.* "If ye could see Me, My life would be still before you, but in My absence, this spiritual light will give you perfect confidence in My innocence, and boldness in the faith to convince others."

11. *Of judgment.* Of a judgment. 1. That which is now made, i. e., the condemnation of the kingdom of the devil. Satan fell from heaven. In the triumph of Jesus over the grave his reign was over. For though He is still powerful in the hearts of the wicked, yet in certain respects He is "reserved in chains of darkness," with crushed and limited powers. Saints escape from him, by faith, conquer and defy all his might, lie down to die in joyful hope, despising his greatest weapon, the fear of death. Thus Satan *is* judged, and the Holy Ghost, in the blessed works and words of the Apostles has written out the history of the victory for all believers. Or 2. The future judgment, which will complete all that is now begun; when Satan will be bound, and with all his wretched crew cast into hell. This the Holy Spirit now reveals and presses it upon the hearts of all, to urge them to remain steadfast to the end in the works which God has provided for them to walk in. ¶ *The prince of this world.* Satan. See note, xii. 31. ¶ *Is judged.* The judgment of Satan began in the conquest of Christ over death. And so the present tense is used, though the full and formal sentence is deferred till the consummation of all things.

12. *Yet many things.* Many other

say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into [a]all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

[a] 1 Jno. 2. 20, 27.

Christian doctrines, which you are not in a state of mind to receive at present. For there are doctrines and opinions now resulting from *facts of history*, which we can now receive, which would have been enigmas to any persons of a former age before they came out in the events. Thus, the resurrection, which the disciples could not understand, is now the centre of many irrefragable inferences common to every understanding. The receiving the Gentiles into the Church, would have shocked their Jewish prejudices. The fall of Jerusalem, opened another scene of changes, which the very piety of the disciples would have scouted.

13. *The Spirit of truth.* The inward Teacher, the Regenerator of the heart, which purifies the inward eye to see the true light. ¶ *Will guide you into all truth.* Not natural, but Christian or spiritual truth. This promise is not to be frittered away into generalisms, as has been done by some. It marks a great spiritual change to come upon the disciples, even their Christian regeneration, when, born again into a new world, a new life, they should see all the truth of that world in its harmonies and adaptations to human wants, and be fit preachers of righteousness in this new covenant. The time is specified by St. John (ch. vii. 39) after Jesus should be glorified by ascending to God. It was the Pentecostal beginning of that *indwelling* of the Holy Ghost, in the spirits of men, by a new covenant "written in their hearts and in their minds," according to ancient promise. That we cannot exactly define the mode or limits of this change, is no reason why we should doubt it. It was the subject of special promise by the Saviour, the sign of His new kingdom, taught before to Nicodemus. John iii. 3, 5. ¶ *Not speak of Himself.* Not speak by self-will, or to give another teaching from mine. To speak of one's self signifies in this Gospel, to speak contrary to the Divine intention of God the Father. See ch. vii. 17; xiv. 10. The Spirit should continue the same teaching of Christ—the will of God and obedience thereto. ¶ *Whatsoever He shall hear.* See note, v. 30. The Spirit proceedeth from the Father and Son, therefore there shall be perfect oneness of doctrine. ¶ *Things to come.* Such future things as are necessary to the good of the Church. All things and doctrines which look to the future judgment, the just inferences concerning it and our relations to it, are subjects, which the Holy Spirit impresses upon the hearts of Christians. Besides this, special Apostles were, as St. John, endowed with the gift of prophecy.

14. *Shall glorify Me.* "Shall cause you and others to see the true glory which has shone in Me, the perfection of righteousness. He shall teach you to give honor and worship to Me, and to look up to Me and understand that I am the eternal Son of God." The spiritual doctrines of Scripture are discerned only by the spiritual mind. ¶ *Shall receive of Mine.* "He shall undertake the New Covenant when I leave it and receive My work of instruction among men." We learn that the Spirit bears this relation to the Son, that while equal with Him, being God, it receives of Him, proceeds from Him and reveals His glory. ¶ *Shall shew it.* Shall reveal it, 1. By inspiration, the effects of which were miracles, prophecies and the Scriptures. 2. By indwelling common to all believers, which results in the graces of love, piety and holiness. It is the office of the Spirit to breathe as the breath of life in the Church, to

15 [a]All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and [b]shall shew *it* unto you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail [c]hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

a Mat. 11. 27. *b* 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11. *c* Is. 26. 17.

work in all Christians "to will and to do of God's good pleasure," at the same time that they work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

15. *All things.* See Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27. All powers in the spiritual kingdom of Christ are committed equally to the Son and Spirit. No language could be plainer to express the equality of the three persons of the Godhead. We are taught by it the duty of worshipping each, as we have access to the Father by the Son through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 18.

16. *A little while.* But a few hours now intervened before the crucifixion of Christ. ¶ *Ye shall not see Me.* He would lay in the grave, His soul being in the place of departed spirits, in Paradise. ¶ *Again a little while.* After three days. ¶ *Because I go to the Father.* Christ did not go to the Father as He told Mary at the grave, until after His resurrection. Ch. xx. 17. The meaning is, that He would appear again to them for forty days, at different times, because it was the order of things, that He should rise from the dead in order to ascend to heaven in the spiritual body.

20. *Ye shall weep.* "You understand not the great truths of the resurrection, and shall weep in despair over the wreck of your hopes of a temporal kingdom, when you see Me dead." See Lu. xxiii. 27. ¶ *The world.* Evil men; especially the nation of the Jews, who were present at Jerusalem. The word is used in this sense throughout these few chapters. There were two parties, the disciples, a few sheep in the wilderness, timid, cowering and perplexed; the wicked crowd of unbelieving Jews, who sought to crush the "Holy One and the Just." ¶ *Shall be turned into joy.* The joy of the Jews into woes which were coming upon them. The disciples were to be taught the bitter lesson of "knowing Christ no more after the flesh." Their affection to His person, the happiness they had experienced in His guidance of them as their teacher and friend, their ambitious designs, were to make way for a higher, more spiritual insight into the preciousness of His work in their souls, the sense of sins pardoned and the soul purified for the abodes of heaven. And the change would be effected in their anguish of spirit. Often do we weep

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your[a] joy no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, [b]Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken

a Ac. 13. 52; 1 Pe. 1. 8.

b Mat. 7. 7; Ch. 14. 13; & 15. 16.

while God produces in us a similar change, and wrests our affections from carnal things to fix them on spiritual. But with all true Christians the light affliction, for a while grievous, is changed into patience here, and into joy in heaven.

22. *I will see you again.* After He had arisen from the dead. ¶ *No man taketh from you.* "Your conviction of the certainty of salvation by Me, will be so sure after I have gone to prepare a place for you, that no man can deprive you of it." The treasure which is put in trust with our Lord Jesus in the heavenly mansions, is the only treasure that is safe. It is "an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.

23. *In that day.* After the Spirit has come to you. ¶ *Ye shall ask Me nothing.* "Then you will be guided by the promptings of the Spirit to seek from God the things which are necessary to you, to give you wisdom and safety." While Jesus was with them they went to Him in all dangers and perplexities, and felt themselves under the lead of a powerful friend, a man of great favor with God. But after this new change, each went directly to God, Father and Son, with no other man to stand between them and the Deity. Jesus was still their High Priest in heaven, to mediate for them, but now they were taught to pray for themselves by access through Him to God. ¶ *In My name.* See note, ch. xiv. 13.

24. *Hitherto.* While He was with them in the flesh. ¶ *Nothing in My name.* They had sought God in the sacrifices and rites of the Mosaic Law, and had sought wisdom from their Teacher. The dawn of that new covenant day had not risen, when with the Spirit in their hearts to teach them to pray and to exhalt them into "a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices," they would take the name of Jesus the Lamb of God on their lips, as the one great sacrifice to propitiate the Deity, and go boldly to the throne of grace. Thus, by inference, the Jewish and all other mortal priesthoods were abolished, that the soul of each believer should go directly to God in prayer, by the merits of the great propitiation, sealed with the name of Christ. ¶ *Ask, and ye shall, &c.* See Matt. vii. 7. "Go freely and ask all things which you shall be taught are necessary to you in your work." See Rom. viii. 26, 27. From this we may learn, 1. That the promise to prayer is general, reaching to all things for which a Christian should pray. Our needs and troubles are not too mean or trifling to be heard on high, if they disturb our peace. 2. That prayers should be guided by the Spirit, according to the Scripture, and in submission to God's will; for "we know not what to pray for as we ought." Not that all that we choose to call so are spiritual prayers, but such only as are for the true good of the soul, and are offered on that condition of submission to God, which the very example of Jesus teacheth us. Thus much the Prayer Book implies: "Almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, we beseech Thee to have compassion upon our infirmities: and those things which, for our

unto you in ‖proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no ‖proverb.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest

‖ Or, *parables.* ‖ Or, *parables.*

‖ Or, *parable.*

unworthiness, we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us for the worthiness of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

25. *In proverbs.* Parables. St. John does not use the Greek word, which is translated parables in the other Gospels, but this in its place, which refers to the same mode of instruction. Jesus taught the disciples in parables, because, 1. The parable conveyed a truth by its similitude or analogy suited to their condition at the time. 2. Because the memory easily retains such teaching, and afterward they would discover the full depth of meaning contained in it. 3. Because many subjects could not be clearly revealed at that time, to wit: His resurrection, the calling of the Gentiles, &c., until they had come to pass. The parable prefigured, explained and gave the reasons for them. ¶ *I will show you plainly.* This clearer light of spiritual truth shines in all the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles. They retained their Judaic ignorance till the Spirit illuminated their hearts; afterwards they became in turn teachers of true righteousness. 1 Cor. ii. 10–15; Gal. vi. 1; Col. i. 9. ¶ *Of the Father.* Doctrines or truths concerning God's will and plan of human salvation, such as follow from the new covenant in Christ. For instance, justification by free grace, regeneration, atonement and the like.

26. *I say not that I will pray, &c.* He had so said (ch. xiv. 16) in respect to the coming of the Holy Ghost. Now His meaning seems to be that all barriers should be removed to the free exercise of prayer. It would not be necessary for them to wait until they knew that He had prayed for particular blessings, but they should themselves go to God to make known their wants. For as the Founders and guides of the Church, they needed such a power. The Spirit would be to them as the ancient Shechinah in the Tabernacle, the Urim and Thummim to the High Priest of the Jews. It would guide them what to pray for aright. Jesus as High Priest ever liveth to make intercession for us, by the merits of His precious death. Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24.

27. See ch. xiv. 21, 23.

28. See ch. iii. 19; vi. 14, 62.

29. *Now speakest Thou plainly.* Concerning this love of God for us. It is doubtful if they understood Him, even for a moment, or whether they did not suppose that His words signified some temporary absence, in order to return with greater majesty to a temporal kingdom. But as they did take His meaning, they *believed*, and Jesus tenderly assures their faith, not their insuperable ignorance. For His words are no plainer in themselves than those He had before used.

30. *Thou knowest all things.* Says St. Augustine, "But why do they say so, when the hour in which He was to speak without proverbs, was yet future and only promised? Because our Lord's communications *still continuing*

not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the [c]hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to [‖]his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet[b] I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, [e]that in me ye might have peace. [d]In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: [e]I have overcome the world.

a Mat. 26. 31. ‖ Or, *his own home.*

b Ch. 8. 29. *c* Ro. 5. 1; Col. 1. 20. *d* 2 Tim. 3. 12. *e* Ro. 8. 37; 1 Jno. 5. 4.

proverbs to them, they are so far from understanding them, that they do not even understand their not understanding them." St. Chrysostom in the same spirit says: "See how imperfect they yet were, after so many and great things, now at last to say, *now we are, &c.*, saying it too, as if it were conferring a favor. "Thou knowest what offends us before we tell Thee. Thou hast relieved us by saying, *the Father loveth us.*"

31. *Do ye now believe?* A question of pity and tenderness over their mistake and frailty. They probably saw in His words a gleam of encouragement for their "trust that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel," i. e., "restored the kingdom unto Israel." Luke xxiv. 21; Acts i. 6. Jesus pities this error, because His spiritual kingdom was as yet beyond their weak faith, and extinguishes the brief, mistaken fancy. The Christian faith is of a truer wisdom and higher grade than theirs, who in two days forsook Him and fled.

32. *The hour cometh.* That is, on Friday, the next day. ¶ *Scattered.* Matt. xxvi. 31; Zech. xiii. 7. ¶ *Every man to his own.* To seek his own safety. Or they would scatter and return to their old homes and occupations. The disciples as soon as their amazement was over, after the death of Jesus, seem to have given up every hope which they had formed, and returned to Galilee and their former pursuits. See John xxi. 1–14. Jesus after the resurrection gave them a special charge to meet again in Jerusalem, at the Pentecost; so little did they "now believe." ¶ *Leave Me alone.* The disciples forsook Jesus; Peter denied Him; John, with a few women, were beholders of His last agonies. Ch. xix. 25–27. Our Lord's words seem to refer to that loneliness, which occurred from their want of true faith; that of all the world, there was none to understand His work, to believe in Him truly, and to see in Him the Saviour of the world, to hold such communion with Him as Moses and Elias did on the Mount of Transfiguration, who spake "of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." Luke xix. 31. It was this loneliness which He felt; this weakness of their faith, which He opposes to the presence of God with Him. ¶ *Because the Father is with Me.* "Though deserted by all men, I shall still be supported by the love of God. Though He suffers Me to fall into great tribulation, and horror, yet His love and care will be with Me, to uphold and comfort Me."

33. *In Me.* "In My example of enduring suffering greater than any which can befall you, in My premonitions, showing you that you will not fall into any unprepared trials, and in My Spirit strengthening you to endure all as I have done for the glory of God and the good of mankind." In all these ways the Christian puts his trust in Christ. ¶ *In the world.* The world as opposed to the little flock of believers; the world of wicked and unbelieving men. ¶ *I have overcome the world.* "By the *world* we must understand the evil of the world, its wickedness, troubles and temptations; all in it which we have reason to fear and avoid, for the sake of our safety or our happiness in this life or the next. And these

CHAPTER XVII.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the [a]hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 [b]As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this [c]is life eternal, that they might know thee the [d]only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

a Dan. 9. 26; Ac. 2. 23. *b* Dan. 7. 14; Mat. 28. 18. *c* 1 Jno. 5. 18–20. *d* 1 Thes. 1. 9.

Christ overcame by expiating human sin upon the cross; and enabling the faithful, by the assistance of His grace, to subdue their corrupt passions; by Himself submitting to poverty, sorrow and even death itself, and by displaying those bright and heavenly virtues which shone in His whole character and conversation."—*Abp. Tillotson.*

CHAPTER XVII.

1. *These words.* Those contained in the preceding chapters. Having given His disciples their last instructions to remain in His love, their consolations and warnings, Jesus now lifts His voice in prayer for them. Thus He sets them an example before He leaves them in the flesh, of the manner of their approaches to God. We are told often in the Gospels that Jesus spent much time in prayer, but have no other prayer left us like this. ¶ *Lifted up His eyes.* "He lifted up His eyes to heaven to teach us *intentness* in our prayers; that we should stand with uplifted eyes not of the body only, but of the mind."—*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *The hour, &c.* See note, ch. xii. 27. ¶ *Glorify Thy Son.* See chap. xi. 4. "Support Me in the coming agony, that I may triumph over death, and perfect the plan of salvation, by which sinners may be forgiven, to the glory of Thy power and mercy." Our Lord as man needed the power of Divine grace, both physically, by the aid of angelic ministry, and spiritually. This He sought in these last hours of His life, by earnest prayer, that He might perfect the work which He had begun, and endure the bitter cup of the cross. ¶ *Thy Son may glorify Thee.* It is to the glory of God, in the presence of all creatures and ages, that He "can be just and yet the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 26. Therefore by the Church, of sinners saved from sin, "is made known the *manifold wisdom of God.*" Eph. iii. 10. This glory centres in the cross, by which the Captain of our salvation was led home to glory, that we might follow Him thither.

2. *Power over all flesh.* Power as Mediator. The Son of God in His Divine nature had this power over all creation, inasmuch as He created all things. Col. i. 16. But here our Lord grounds His right on the gift of God to Him in His human nature, as man, in which He suffered death. Ps. ii. 8. See note, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. ¶ *All flesh.* All men. Matt. xxiv. 22. ¶ *Eternal life.* Ch. v. 24. ¶ *To as many, &c.* See note, ch. x. 16; vi. 37. To all whose hearts were inclined to seek Him, whether Jews or Gentiles, this redemption is free. For Christ died for all men. But here He is praying, not for the world, but for that Church of His love, which He is to present to God pure and spotless. The language is therefore limited to those *given* to Christ in the highest sense, His willing, obedient children.

3. *Life eternal.* Comp. notes, ch. vi. 63; xi. 25; xii. 50. In the knowledge of God and Christ, contained in the Christian covenant, is found the way of obedience and salvation. This knowledge is fundamentally necessary to receive the favor of God, and life with Him. ¶ *Might know Thee.* "That Jews might be taught Thy true nature, and Gentiles turned from their idolatries, to that full knowledge of Thy will which I have revealed." Heretics speculated in the early Church, concerning this knowledge. It is not knowledge

4 I have glorified [c]thee on the earth; I have [b] finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, [c]with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

a Ro. 3. 26; & 5. 21. *b* He. 5. 8, 9. *c* Ch. 1. 1; Col. 1. 15; 1 Pe. 1. 3, 10.

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without practice, but the knowledge of those who know and do their Lord's will. ¶ *The only true God. True*, in opposition to the idol-gods, to which most of the world was at that time subject, not in exclusion of the Son and Holy Spirit, which are, with the Father, the only true God. Our Lord is speaking here of His mediatorship, and the whole Christian system, which teaches one only God in three persons, against all idolatrous schemes. ¶ *Jesus Christ.* Know the plan of salvation by a Saviour. This knowledge is here extended of course to the whole Christian covenant, in all its conditions, precepts, laws and ordinances. He who receives the knowledge of a portion of the covenant to any purpose, will know, and do all that is therein contained. In "the knowledge of God standeth our eternal life," because by it we have every thing needed by us, to be saved. 1 John v. 20; Phil. iii. 10.

4. *I have glorified Thee.* By His pure life and divine wisdom and patience, surpassing all human virtue and wisdom. ¶ *Finished the work.* He had finished the *work*, not the suffering. This glory which had been committed to Him to labor for, He had now completed. He had wrought miracles, chosen and taught disciples, cast abroad His seed of wisdom in the minds of the people, had completed all that preparation for the future Church, which was necessary. This prayer seems the turning point, in which Jesus begins to yield passive obedience to the "hour" and will of God, which hurried Him to His death. How happy for us if in any good sense we can at the last say this, in review of our lives. We have a work to do, and are to be judged by the deeds done in the body. God give us grace to continue in all such good works as He has prepared for us to walk in, that when death comes, we may have only to submit to the call of God.

5. *With thine own self.* Jesus in His human nature ascended as the first-fruits of the dead to the immediate presence of God, where He sits at His right hand. ¶ *Before the world was.* "We take the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, to be the glory which He predestined for Him on earth. He now prays; That glory which I had with Thee by Thy predestination, it is now time that I should have at Thy right hand."—*St. Augustine.* "He prayed that that which was mortal might receive the glory immortal, that the corruption of the flesh might be transformed and absorbed into the incorruption of the Spirit."—*St. Hillary.* Our Lord prays for a glory to be received by His human nature, but before this He had also possessed a glory in His Divine nature. For the words "which I had with Thee" can be understood fully only of actual possession in some way by a person really existing. The man was not yet born, but the Divine Person was from eternity, as other Scriptures show. John i. 1, 2; iii. 13; vi. 62.

6. *I have manifested Thy name.* "I have revealed Thee now unto men as the Father, and all Thy attributes and relations, in the New Covenant." For this teaching the Father's name, is not the same as teaching the name of God simply. The latter was done by Moses to the Jews. For they knew Him as God, from all false gods, but they knew Him not as Father, the Father of saints, saved in Christ. This full knowledge of His name, was manifested to the disciples. ¶ *Thou gavest Me.* "To those

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: [a]I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition:

a 1 Jno. 5. 19.

disciples whom Thou hast inclined to obey Me." No man can draw another save by the cords of a man. Jesus called His disciples, the influences of Divine grace inclined them to follow, and God committed their souls to the keeping of the Saviour.

7. *Of Thee.* "They have been taught that all My power and instructions are committed to Me by Thy good will."

8. *The words.* The things; that system of instruction, which is now called by us the Holy Gospel. The disciples verily believed that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of God," but did not understand as yet, in what sense He designed to found a kingdom.

9. *I pray for them.* "At this present, I pray for their preservation from dangers at hand." ¶ *I pray not for the world.* Not that our Lord refused to pray for all men, for others than His disciples, for afterward He prays for them (v. 21), and on the cross for His murderers. Lu. xxiii. 34. But He offers this earnest prayer for His own friends, with that especial affection, which He felt for them. And these words were heard by those disciples, and encouraged their sinking hearts, by the knowledge that their Master had commended them especially to the Father. ¶ *They are Thine.* Given me, but not lost to Thee. The union of love which exists between the Father, the Son, and the true believer, is here expressed by an intercommunity of interests and rights. The heretic seizes on this passage, to sustain his novelties, and the Christian sometimes looks at it so entirely as a weapon of polemics, that they lose the beauty of it. Between Father and Son there is perfect oneness of being; between God and the Mediator, and the faithful, there is unity of Spirit. They are one, by that one Spirit, which, uniting the two first in substance as one Being, joins the others in oneness of love and interests.

11. *No more, &c.* No more with them to protect and guide them. How tender this solemn committal of them to the Father of all. ¶ *In Thy name.* By Thy power, preserve them in the same obedience to Thee, which they have shown. ¶ *That they may be one.* United in their wills, purposes, and affections, by the Spirit of grace. ¶ *As We are one.* "As We are united, Father and Son, Son of God and man, in one love and purpose." "That as the Father and the Son are one, not only by equality of substance, but also in will, so they between whom and God the Son is Mediator may be one, not only by the oneness of nature, but by the union of love."—*St. Augustine.*

12. *While I was with them.* During His ministry, the Saviour had kept them by instructions to them, by foreseeing and preventing dangers, and by praying

[a]that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, [b]but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify [c]them through thy truth: thy [d]word is truth.

a Ps. 109. 8; Ac. 1. 20. *b* Gal. 1. 4; 2 Thes. 3. 3. *c* Eph. 5. 26; 1 Pe. 1. 22. *d* Ch. 8. 63.

to God for them, as He did often for whole nights. For the disciples as Jews had not that direct access to the Father, which they afterwards enjoyed, but had the notions common to a people bound to approach God by sacrifices. Now Jesus prays for them in their hearing, as they will soon pray for themselves. ¶ *In Thy name.* "By Thy help in the worship of Thee, and the profession of Thy name."—*Grotius.* ¶ *Thou gavest Me.* To be disciples and future Apostles. It was not that God had given them to Christ, by an infallible decree, that they should be saved, for Judas, who was lost, is also said here to have been given. Our Saviour is speaking in language natural to His day. And the *giving* of which He speaks, is that giving the Apostles to be founders of the Church, which, their fidelity being supposed, would result in their eternal salvation. If the Calvinistic theory is offered as the true explanation of the thoughts which may be existing between the Son and the Father, in their secret decrees, it matters not to us to inquire into it, as it is not revealed to us. ¶ *But the son of perdition.* Except Judas. He is lost, of his own free will, and has become worthy of destruction. One worthy of perdition. The Hebrew language had so few adjectives, that it had several ways of expressing ideas, which we express by them. A warrior, was a son of strength; a bad man, a son of wickedness; Arabians, sons of the East, &c. So this word here signifies simply a wicked lost man, whose treachery is worthy of punishment. See Matt. xi. 19; xxiii. 15. ¶ *Fulfilled.* See Ps. cix. 8. This terrible denunciation of the one hundred and ninth Psalm, is believed to refer to the wretched traitor Judas. Our Saviour seems to refer to it as a whole.

13. *My joy is fulfilled, &c.* See note, ch. xv. 11. "That they might receive in consequence of My redemption, the Holy Spirit, and the joy which they will have in Me, from its illumination." Acts xiii. 52.

14. *I have given them.* Completed the revelation intrusted to Me. See v. 8. ¶ *The world, &c.* Ch. xv. 18–21.

15. *Out of the world.* "Not that they, like Elisha, may be carried to heaven in chariots of flame, nor be taken like Moses, by a gentle end, to abodes of bliss." For the office of Apostle was to lead them to far other scenes and trials. They were to preach the news of the unsearchable riches of Christ to all nations. Jesus had fitted them for this work, and does not, in His tenderness for them as friends, wish to remove them from their trials and triumphs as Apostles. ¶ *From the evil.* From the evil, which wicked men will work, or from the devil. For this word in Greek sometimes means one, and sometimes the other, perhaps often both. For the devil and evil are in a measure as cause and effect, and inseparably joined in fact. See note, Matt. vi. 13.

16. See ch. xv. 19.

17. *Sanctify them.* "Make them holy, and devote them to Thy service by the powers of the Holy Ghost." The word used in the original has both these

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I [a]sanctify myself, that they also might be [‖]sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

a He. 2. 17, 18; & 5. 9. ‖ Or, *truly sanctified.*

meanings. And as the means of keeping them from evil, Jesus prays that they may be made righteous and pure, by which they will be kept from moral evil; that they may be devoted to God's work by gifts of grace, so that having on His panoply (Eph. vi. 11–18), they may be able to stand against the prince of evil, the devil. In the New Testament *sanctification* is generally used of some actual gift or grace received, sometimes of those graces which make one holy himself, sometimes of gifts, which make him the instrument of grace to others, as the Apostles were. ¶ *Through Thy truth.* "Make them holy by the gift of the Holy Spirit, and sound doctrines: for sound doctrines give knowledge of God and sanctify the soul. And as He is speaking of doctrines, He adds, *Thy word is truth*, i. e. there is in it no lie, nor any thing typical or bodily. Again *Sanctify, &c.*, may mean, separate them for the ministry of the word and preaching."—*St. Chrysostom.* The words, *truth, light, word*, and others, are used by St. John, as indexes of the whole spiritual covenant of Christ. John viii. 32; xiv. 6. So the Covenant of Christ, by the Holy Spirit, sanctified the Apostles. The one by its knowledge of truth, the other by making that truth "as it is in Jesus," lively and effective in the soul. ¶ *Thy word is truth.* "Thy Covenant revealed by Me, as Thy *Word;* Thy eternal counsel and purpose of salvation, is a system of perfect truth, and can sanctify all who believe in it." For though all other kinds of truth fail of moral effect, and the philosopher, astronomer, physician, and scholar may with their learning have hearts polluted with vice, the knowledge of pure and undefiled religion, as those Apostles learned it, must purify the heart, and sanctify it for every good word and work. Eph. iv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 13; 1 Pet. i. 22, 23.

"Thou art the truth: Thy word alone,
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart."—*Hy.* 209.

19. *I sanctify myself.* Sanctify is sometimes a sacrificial word, meaning to consecrate or devote to God. This under the old covenant was done by the slaughter of victims in sacrifice. Lev. viii. As our Lord Jesus was perfect in all the gifts and graces of holiness, these words are interpreted in that sacrificial sense. "Aaron was devoted as High Priest for the sake of the people, by animals slain in sacrifice; I on the other hand, now about to die, offer Myself, consecrated and sanctified as High Priest for the sake of My followers by My own act, willingly submitting to be offered as the victim." See Heb. ix. 14; x. 10, 14. ¶ *That they also, &c.* That they may receive all the benefits of this sacrifice, according to the covenant of reconciliation made with Him; or that they in their turn may learn of Him how to devote themselves entirely to the service of God, even unto death. "For I make them too an oblation to Thee; meaning either that He who was offered up was their head, or that they would be offered up too, as the Apostle saith: *Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy.*"—*St. Chrysostom.*

20, 21. *For them also, &c.* The prayer now throws one glimpse along the track of future times to pray for the whole company of the faithful, the Church Catholic of all ages and countries. And what is this petition for? *For unity.* Schism, disunion, divisions are the marks of the kingdom of darkness; unity the law of the Church of Christ. Eph. iv. 4. ¶ *All may be one.* Not merely in mind and affection, but in all

21 That they all may be [a] one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, [b] even as we are one;

a Ro. 12. 5; Eph. 4. 4. *b* 1 Jno. 1. 3; & 3. 24.

things that compose unity. For our Lord uses here language stronger than is explained by the union of feeling. It must be a unity modelled after that indissoluble intercommunity which exists between Father and Son. The Church is one then, 1. In unity of interest and affection. All Christians are bound to seek the unity of the Spirit, that strong principle of charity which is eloquently described by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. One in unity of doctrine. There can be great room for difference of opinion in the Church. For all are not narrowed down to one rule of thought, in many things. But in the great system of Christian truth, as contained in the Creeds, there must be unity. Difference here is heresy. 3. One in unity of holy practices. The customs of nations differ, but there is a holiness of principle and practice which must be common to all men every where. Hence certain Churches, failing in this, have become corrupt. 4. One in ecclesiastical unity. The early Church was constituted under the Apostles as the chief shepherds. Presbyters, also termed for a while Bishops, as the overseers of particular parishes or cities; and Deacons, whose duties were divided between preaching and acts of charity. And though for a while the exact duties of each office were not precisely defined, yet unity to Christ the Head, by union with the Church, as committed to the Apostles, was insisted upon as necessary for all men. This was the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, one Body, one Spirit, "even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," &c., which St. Paul discourses upon, Eph. iv. This Apostolic Church is now among us, protestant against the corrupt Church of Rome; catholic, as distinguished from the various societies which distract the Reformed Church of Christ. ¶ *As Thou, Father, art in Me.* See note, ch. xiv. 10. "Thou art one with Me by nature: so let them be united by the all-pervading unity of the Spirit dwelling in them." See in what terms the Apostles spake of this unity of the Church. See Acts iv. 32, &c.; 1 Cor. xii. 4–31; Eph. ii. 20, 22; Rom. xii. 5. ¶ *One in Us.* "United not as they are men, but by the fruits which grow in them, from the Spirit, which we shall send them." To be one in God is not to become divine, but to be a "partaker of the divine nature," i. e. to receive the fruits, the light, the graces of the Holy Spirit, to be purified to a state beyond any thing which our own efforts could ever have reached, if unaided by the power of God. ¶ *That the world may believe.* The grand argument which is visible in this world to show the truth of the Gospel to sinners, is the unity of the Church. See ch. xiii. 35. And Satan has wrought no work more subtle and wicked than filling the Church with discord and contentions. For religion as a system of redemption becomes practicable and tangible with the mass of men only as it is seen in the works of Christians. And were the efforts of Christians this day united as one man, in their zeal, prayers, means and men, the whole world would feel the thrill, and learn of the Church to believe in the Lord, who had power to unite them in one fold.

22. *The glory.* This glory which was given to the Apostles was the power of doing miracles, and of conquering sin in every form, in becoming holy and triumphing over death; in a word, all things that constituted the glory of the human nature of Jesus, and in which Christians are seen to imitate Him. ¶ *May be one, &c.* One in all

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made [a]perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with [b]me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love [c]wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

a Col. 3. 14. *b* 1 Thes. 4. 17. *c* Ch. 15. 9.

respects in which they can so be, even as we are one. The Apostles are the best interpreters here. 1. Of one mind and accord. 2 Cor. xiii. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 8. 2. Of one spiritual covenant reaching over all times. Eph. i. 10; Heb. ii. 11. 3. Of one covenant in Christ, uniting Jew and Gentile. Eph. ii. 14; Gal. iii. 28. 4. Of ecclesiastical unity by the sacraments and profession. 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 13.

23. *May be perfect in one.* To be made perfect in the Scriptural use, is sometimes to reach those graces which mark the full-grown Christian man, as opposed to those who are only "babes in Christ." 1 Cor. ii. 6. Again it is used of the unseen world, as the saints are there sealed against all falling. Heb. xii. 23. But here the perfection which is prayed for is that of the whole Church as one pure and spotless Bride, free from strife and contention. For the perfection of the saints is attained in all the beauty of holiness, in a united Church; while distortions, doubts and perversities will mark the individual Christians of an age of sects and schisms. When the Church is united in efforts for "perfecting holiness in the fear of God," these doubts vanish, zeal grows strong and healthy, mutual charity warms all the members; the young are modest and pure, the impetuous are restrained, and all grow up into the fulness of stature of ripe saints. Thus St. Paul by a beautiful use of the growth of the body, in which every part receives health while it gives health, and becomes strong by union, illustrates this spiritual law by which we may "become perfect in oneness." Eph. iv. 16. ¶ *That the world may know.* See note, v. 21.

24. *I will.* I desire, wish. ¶ *Where I am.* In heaven. Our Lord throughout this gospel is represented as using the present tense, in speaking of His presence in heaven. See ch. vii. 34; xii. 26. As Son of God, He was there; as man, He was about to ascend thither. ¶ *May behold My glory.* And partake of it. For to be with Him, to see His glory, is also to become like Him. "We all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. 18. And says St. John: "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, *for we shall see Him as He is.*" 1 Epis. iii. 2. ¶ *Before, &c.* The Son of God existed from all eternity, and this plan of salvation for a sinful race by His redemption was predetermined before the foundation of the world. Eph. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 20.

25. See note, verse 5.

26. *Thy name.* Ver. 6. ¶ *Will declare it.* Continue to declare that which I have begun. ¶ *I in them.* By the Spirit. Uniting them to Me in the Church and sacraments, and making them obedient to Me in faith and love. "This seventeenth chapter unfolds, in a short compass, that grand mystery of the Gospel, the instituted means of the salvation of mankind by the Father and the Son, conjointly, with their love for the world."—*Abp. Wake.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook [a]Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

a 2 Sam. 15. 23. *b* Lu. 15. 23.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *Went forth.* From the house where they had taken the Passover, and also out of the city. ¶ *The brook Cedron.* The winter stream or torrent. The name Cedron, spelt also Kedron, means black. The brook was so named either from flowing through the dark, narrow ravine between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives on the east, or from receiving all the drains of the city. Others seek the name from its banks being shaded with numerous *cedars*, the name of which in Hebrew signifies to be dark. This proper name is mentioned, as Grotius thinks, to suggest the parallel between Christ and David, who fled along this same path from Absalom, whose ingratitude resembled that of the Jews, while Ahithophel was a type of Judas. 2 Sam. xv. 23. The Cedron is dry in summer, but in the rainy season rushes with noise and rapids down to the Dead Sea. ¶ *A garden.* At the foot of the Mount of Olives was Gethsemane. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 34. Here comes in the narrative of St. Matthew xxvi. 30–46; St. Mark xiv. 26–42; St. Luke xxii. 39–46.

2. *Oft-times resorted thither.* During the annual feasts, when, as a man born under the law of Moses, He came to Jerusalem to fulfil His duty before the Lord. Thither He brought His disciples to rest them and instruct them, apart from the noise of the city. There, too, during the solitary hours of night, He often prayed to the Father, for a lost world. Jesus did not flee from His enemies, but when the hour came to suffer, went on in His usual path, neither seeking nor avoiding the malice which would cause His death.

3. *A band of men.* See note, Matt. xxvi. 47; xxvii. 27. ¶ *With lanterns.* It was the night of the full moon, but their malice is cautious to an extreme. The garden, shaded with olives, may have been dark in places. They will not allow any chance of mistake, for want of a little light. It may, however, have been part of the police duty to carry them, whenever they went out at night to keep the peace during the feasts of the Jews.

6. *Went backward, &c.* See Ps. xxxv. 4, where David prays against his enemies, that they may be thus "turned back and brought to confusion." They were amazed by a power and majesty in Jesus, not only of conscious innocence, but of awful dignity, beyond all others. Says St. Augustine: "Without a blow, one word struck, drove back, prostrated a crowd, fierce with hatred, terrible with arms. For God was hid in the flesh, and the eternal day was so obscured by His human body, that He was sought

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, [c]Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.

10 Then [b]Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

a Ch. 17. 12. *b* Mat. 26. 51; Mark 14. 47; Lu. 22. 49.

12 Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

13 And led him away to Annas first; (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.)‖

14 Now [c]Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 ¶ [d]And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus, into the palace of the high priest.

‖ *And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas, the high priest.*—ver. 24. *c* Ch. 11. 50. *d* Mat. 26. 58.

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with lanterns and torches, that He might be slain in the darkness. What shall He do when He cometh to judge, who did thus when He was going to be judged?"

8. *Let these go, &c.* That is, the eleven disciples. They were not the objects of Jewish malice, or if so, it was satisfied with capturing the Head of the little company. He claimed to be a king. They did not, and could be passed by with safety. We should note this tender love of Jesus to His friends. He makes no plea for Himself, but all for them. And in this scene of terror, He seeks their safety from cruel men, as He had before secured it in the storm on the lake. It also leaves them without excuse for deserting Him, as their personal safety was made sure from the first.

9. *The saying, &c.* Ch. xvii. 12. Of this number, Judas being excepted, no one was suffered to fall away entirely from Christ, by fear of death. All died afterwards, but were preserved from perdition by faith in Him.

10–11. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 51, 52. ¶ *The servant's name was Malchus.* The names mentioned here are not given by the other Evangelists, as Peter and Malchus were probably both alive at the time the Gospels were written. Now that both are dead, St. John gives the particulars, which show in what sense St. Peter had made the promise to stand by his Master to the death, and how he had intended to keep it.

12. See Matt. xxvi. 50.

13. *To Annas first.* See note, Luke iii. 2. Annas or Ananus, a man of great ability and energy, whose opinion and influence were of great weight, though he was not in office at the time. His apartment was probably under the same roof with that of Caiaphas. ¶ *That same year.* Ch. xi. 49.

14. *Given counsel.* He had before this brought the Sanhedrim to a decision by his opinion, which became prophetic. See ch. xi. 49, 50. It was plain, therefore, that the cause of Jesus was prejudged from the beginning. Caiaphas had bought the office of high priest, for the year, and maintained his place by truckling to the evil and cruel-minded men of power, whose influence sustained him.

15–18. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 57, 58. ¶ *Another disciple.* Doubtless St. John himself, as we afterwards find him present at the cross. By some it is

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; (for it was cold:) and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple,[a] whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

[a] Ch. 7. 14, 26, 28.

supposed to have been a citizen of Jerusalem, but without good reason, as no citizen was of the number of the twelve disciples. It manifests how easily Peter might have followed Christ, that one other of the disciples was unquestioned throughout this night. The rulers had no fear of the twelve. Peter would probably have escaped questioning, if he had been nearer Jesus. The Christian is ever safest who is nearest to his Lord in a spirit of prayer, and quiet courage to resist all compromises with a wicked world.

19. *Of His disciples.* His disciples at large, not the twelve. They knew that many of the citizens and Jews believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus, Zaccheus and others of some note for influence or wealth, were suspected. They would know, if possible, how far this party extended its number and means. They deal with Jesus as with a carnal leader of a faction, and begin by efforts to get at the numbers of His followers. ¶ *His doctrine.* Probably His teaching, as to this civil or political matter. How He claimed to be king, and in what manner this opinion modified His conduct among His personal friends. Or they may have desired to catch Him in His words, that they might make out some plausible charge against Him.

20. *Openly to the world.* "There has been no conspiracy, no private society, with opinions subversive of the law or state. All has been open, as you have heard it in the temple." Jesus evidently answers the charge of *sedition*, which had been implied in the questions asked Him. ¶ *Always resort.* Daily assembled for worship. The rulers manifest through this eventful night a fear, lest some secret faction should rise against them to rescue their Master. Jesus denies the existence of any such party. ¶ *In secret, &c.* This is to be understood simply as denying the charge of secret doctrines, as *seditions*, or as the secret pledges and opinions of conspirators. This was the only secrecy with which they had to do. Jesus had taught His disciples, in a *manner* different from the crowds, because they were able to bear it; but He had given the same instruction to both classes, and secret or seditious opinions He had given to neither.

21. *Ask them that heard me.* "No man is required to accuse Himself, and do you seek to convict Me as a conspirator by My own mouth? Go and obtain evidence from others. Be a consistent Judge, if not an impartial one." The rebuke was just and severe, for the High Priest was forgetful of every principle of justice in this questioning Jesus to ruin Him.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus [f]with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

24 (Now [a]Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.)

Good Friday.

25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest (being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.[b]

28 ¶ Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the[g] hall of judgment: and it was early; and they[c] themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

‖ Or, *with a rod.* *a* Mat. 26. 57.

b Mat. 26. 74; Mark 14. 72. ‖ Or, *Pilate's house.* *c* Acts 10. 28; & 11. 3.

22. *One of the officers.* Or servants, i. e., one of the attendants. Tyrants and flatterers are ever found together. It gives us a glimpse of this Eastern despotism, which even now weighs upon those same lands, to see the openness with which truth is forced to yield to the will of the wicked oppressor. See 1 Kings xxii. 24. ¶ *With the palm of his hand.* A cuff or slap, as in sudden anger. He is over-zealous, and loves the High Priest so, that he is hurried out of his propriety to strike Jesus on the cheek. See Is. i. 6.

23. *If I have spoken evil, &c.* "If I have done wrong in this, it is not for your private spleen to take revenge. There are solemn forms of law, which are open to us both." Jesus, while He yields Himself to their power, mildly asserts, as an example to all Christians, the dignity of law. For while we should be willing, if necessary, to be patient under injustice, yet the law is a right common to all men who live under it. We should assert its protection against evil-doers. It is a just and worthy self-defence, and we are bound to practise it. The Christian principle of patience is not an unnatural one, but is modified by a rational care for those personal rights which belong to all men. The believer has a natural right to defend his person and property, family, and country, even to extremes, this right being based on our common reason, and recognized by revelation.

24. See v. 13, where this seems to be omitted. See Matt. xxvi. 57.

25, 26. See notes, Matt. xxvi. 71–75.

28. See Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. *Then.* When the morning was come. ¶ *Hall of judgment.* In the tower of Antonia, near the temple. The Prætorium here spoken of was named from the officer, the Prætor, who exercised authority within it. This hall was in the castle of Antonia, which had been built by Herod the Great, situated on the north and west corner of the temple, and named in honor of Mark Anthony. It was spacious, filled with halls, baths, &c., surrounded by a wall three hundred cubits high, and commanded the temple enclosure. It was the citadel of the Romans, whence they ruled the turbulent city with a rod of iron. See Josephus. Antiq. Bk. xv. ch. 14. Acts xxi. 31, 34. ¶ *Be defiled.* Persons ritually unclean could not eat the Passover. And to enter the house of a Gentile was almost certain exposure to some such defilement. See Numb. xix. 22. This is not mentioned here by St.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

John as a fault in them, for St. Peter declared it "*an unlawful thing* for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation," unless taught better by a divine message. Acts x. 28, xi. 3. In this they observed the law. But alas! they had no sense of that more awful defilement which was shutting them out from the true Passover, from a part in the redemptive sacrifice of the Lamb of God. They cared not for the inward purity of a conscience free from rage, hate and falsehood. "O impious blindness! They feared to be defiled by the judgment-hall of a foreign Prefect; to shed the blood of an innocent brother they feared not."—*St. Augustine.* ¶ *That they might eat the Passover.* See note, Matt. xxvi. 12. There are various opinions concerning these words. The difficulty is, how our Lord should have kept the Passover *a day in advance* of the Jews. The opinion given in the notes cited on St. Matthew seems probable, and is as ancient as St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and others. It gave the word Passover a general sense of the feast which followed the supper of the lamb. Others again make it signify the whole seven days of the Pascal week. It is not of any serious difficulty. For at last it is only an imaginary objection to St. John's correctness. We do not know with any certainty upon what custom he founded this remark. And they who did know, made no objection. Meanwhile we have the general veracity of the writer, with his inspiration, to set off against our confessed ignorance.

30. *If He were not a malefactor.* An evil-doer. The word is as general as possible, when it was their bounden duty to make a specific charge against Jesus. Behold their pride and malice. They urge no proofs of crime, but only that they had judged Him to be a bad man. But every bad man is not worthy of death by the laws of men, such only being liable as break the laws. They knew well that their Jewish charge of blasphemy would have weighed nothing with the Roman Prætor. Matt. xxviii. 18. The Jews were forced then to make charges against Jesus of *lese-majesty*, that He taught men not to give tribute to Cæsar, and that He himself was a King. Luke xxiii. 2.

31. *Take ye Him.* It is doubtful whether Pilate said this in scorn at their answer, or by a timid spirit of compromise. If they urged him to condemn a man on their authority only, he might well reply with a biting taunt, reminding them how small that authority was and humbling their pride. Such a spirit was characteristic of Pilate. On the other hand he was impressed with the purity of Jesus and knew that the Jews had delivered Him for envy. He might therefore seek to avoid the responsibility, and rather concede to them for the once, the power of life and death. ¶ *It is not lawful.* This right to pronounce sentence in capital crimes had been taken from the Jewish Sanhedrim by the Romans, about forty years before the destruction of the city, according to their own account. Persons condemned by them, were in some instances put to death by popular tumults. Acts vii. 59, 60. But such mobs were illegal and passed over by the Romans only from necessity, lest greater troubles should arise, or else from indifference to the victims of them. Others suppose that the Jewish Council had the power of death in certain reserved cases, but then denied it, in order to achieve the

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

a 1 Tim. 6. 13.

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done?

36 Jesus [a]answered, My [b]kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

b Dan. 2. 44; & 7. 14; Lu. 12. 14.

execution of Jesus, by the most ignominious mode of death—the cross, which was a punishment peculiar to the pagans. While others suggest that they desired to force Pilate to a share of the responsibility. Certainly if the Jewish rulers feared any seditious intentions in the party of Jesus, they were politic to interest the Roman Prætor on their side. Various fears, wishes and hopes swayed the crowd on that eventful day. All can find in them food for meditation and shame, that men should oppress the innocent, deny their Benefactor, and rage like madmen in their cruelty.

32. *Saying of Jesus.* Namely, that He should be given into the hands of the Gentiles and be crucified. Matt. xx. 19; John iii. 14; xii. 32. The Jews did not practise the punishment of the cross. Hanging was provided for by the law. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. St. Paul derives an inference from this mode of punishment, to show that Christ bore our sins. Gal. iii. 13. The Romans used the cross, against which the law gave the Jew a religious horror.

33. *Art thou the King of the Jews?* Pilate must of course have known the expectation of the whole nation, that the Messiah would soon appear, especially as his predecessor Herod had made his own fear of it notorious by his murder of the innocents at Bethlehem. It perplexed him that one claiming to be the Messiah should be so madly denied by His own countrymen.

34. *Of thyself.* "Dost thou ask this from any desire for information, or acting as an impartial person, or is this My accusation from those without?" If Pilate had asked of his own wish, Jesus would doubtless even then have taught him truth. But if it was urged as a crime, it must be first proved by witnesses, and especially that he had ever acted or taught in a seditious manner.

35. *Am I a Jew?* To care whether you claim to be their King or no? Here spake out the pride of the Pagan—the hauteur of the Roman officer. The Romans despised the Jews of all men on the earth, hated them for their opposition to idols; their observance of seasons and abstinence from certain meats, and their ideas of superior purity, and detested them for their incessant commotions against their own authority. Pilate scorns the notion of even caring for this information concerning the nation. ¶ *Thine own nation.* Pilate would seem just, and was perhaps moved by some feeling of pity for Jesus, or desire to resist the Priests. He manifests clearly that he did not accuse Jesus, but found no fault in Him. He yielded to the urgency of others. Perplexed, he asks Jesus to explain this strange anomaly, that Jews should present Him, a Jew, to a Roman, on a charge which was the pride of the nation. A spiritual truth often appears enigmatical on all its sides to the worldly mind. If disciples could not understand *how* Jesus would be a King, how much less could this pagan soldier discover it.

36. *My kingdom.* "So far am I from being criminal for conspiring against

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. [c]Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What [b]is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.

39 But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 [c]Then cried they all again,

a Ch. 8. 47; 1 Jno. 3, 19; & 4. 6.

b Ro. 1. 20, 21, 22. *c* Ac. 3. 14.

Cæsar, that I own that I have no kingdom here. It is not of this world, therefore it cannot by any possibility interfere with your authority." The kingdoms of this world are given to the Son of God, but in a manner, of which neither accusers nor judge then dreamed. It is a Spiritual Kingdom, which is in the hearts of men, ruling them by faith in the King invisible. It admits no vicegerency here, claiming a temporal sword; but is in the power of the Spirit, converting kings and rulers, and turning the nations, of any mode of government which may be their choice, to the works of holiness and righteousness. ¶ *Would My servants fight.* If Jesus had claimed to be king in any sense which could have been made a crime before Pilate, there would necessarily have been overt acts of sedition. There being none, His innocense was established. ¶ *Not from hence.* Does not arise from this world.

37. *Art Thou a king then?* Dost Thou admit the name in any sense? Pilate was perplexed. He has a charge made, and not sustained, and hears from Jesus language that may justify it. He would know of Him how He claims to be king, if not as a temporal monarch. ¶ *Thou sayest, &c.* As we would say, *I am*, or *yea.* ¶ *To this end.* Our Lord came down from heaven and became man, that He might become King of saints. He gave laws while here on earth as a king to all His subjects. He confirmed them with royal sanctions, settled a ministry under Himself, rules in the affections of saints, conquers sin, death and the devil, now sits at the right hand of God in majesty, and will yet appear as the King eternal, to whom every knee shall bow. Yet so intimate is the connection between His power and the knowledge of the truth, between His glory and the salvation of souls, that His words begin with claiming to be king, and end with the "witness unto the truth," as the noblest prerogative of His sceptre. To this truth He invites His judge, while He disarms his censure. For He claims a kingdom which had only such foundations in convictions, that Cæsar himself could find no fault with Him. ¶ *Every one.* Ch. viii. 47.

38. *What is truth?* The exclamation of the pagan skeptic, who thus represented fairly the unbelief and wrong doubts of the world lying in darkness, dreaming, and at last despairing of ever coming to the knowledge of God. Pilate, as a Roman, had witnessed the ceremonies of all religions assembled at Rome, had doubtless some knowledge of the philosophic schools, and had perhaps tried them, but found no satisfaction. He doubts at last all things, and gives himself to the passing day, without care for eternal things. Alas for the man who is shut in to this skepticism of all good, who, either by overmuch learning or sinning, is hardened into this doubt. The mind may lose itself in sin or foolish speculations, until it may see before it the very King of truth, yet turn away unsatisfied, and sin worse than before. Pilate does not wait for a reply to his exclamation, but goes out again to the Jews. ¶ *No fault.* Luke xxiii. 4.

saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER XIX.

THEN [a]Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him*.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Be-

a Mat. 27. 26, &c.; Mark 15. 15; Lu. 18. 33.

hold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!

6 [b]When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him,

b Ac. 3. 13.

39, 40. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 26–30.

CHAPTER XIX.

1–3. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 15–21.

4. *Behold, &c.* Pilate, afraid of the people, obstinate but fickle; afraid of Jesus, whose innocence he perceived, attempted to escape from his position, by moving the compassion of the multitude. He has Jesus brought forth crowned with thorns and covered with blood. But the mob was now mad with rage, and reject their countryman for the allegiance to the Romans, whom they had always before this hated.

5. *Behold the man.* The simple word *man* is often used to express the dignity of an individual, separate from all outward distinctions of rank, nature, &c. Pilate seems amazed at the meekness of Jesus, His quiet assertion of the cause of truth, His gentleness against the rudeness and cruelty of the soldiery, and can find no title for Him but this—*the man*; not the Jew, nor now even the King of the Jews, but the man, who has surpassed all the sages and stoics of the pagan world, and shown in Himself the dignity of human nature when free from sin and frailty. There was pity too in the words as says St. Augustine: "If ye envy the King, spare the outcast. Ignominy overflows, let envy subside."

6. *Crucify, crucify.* The cry now passed from the priests to the people. They perceived the design of Pilate to free Jesus, the end of his exclamation, and at the same time his wavering at the rage of the mob. They knew him as obstinate but fickle, cruel but timid, bold to do wrong against them, but fearful on reflection, and they urge the cry, swell it louder and louder, till the neighboring temple rings with the angry shout, in order to intimidate the governor, and hurry him to this act of wickedness. Truth prevails by silence, reflection, and conviction; falsehood by noise, tumult and excitement. ¶ *Take ye Him, &c.* Do it yourselves if you are thus strangely bent on crime, I find no fault in Him. Poor Pilate, led on step by step to his ruin. Had he respected truth and mercy, had he been just in all his dealings as the governor to his people, he would not then have been liable to this temptation and evil compromise. He would have resisted the first beginnings of evil, and defended an innocent man to his own salvation. Hardened by former sins and skeptical of all truth, he has no principle of justice by which to resist the mob, and carry out the dictates of his reason.

7. *We have a law.* The Mosaic law. This manifests again the inconsistency of Pilate. What had he to do with their law or political system? He had

[a]We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, [b]because he made himself the Son of God.

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? [c]But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, Thou

a Lev. 24. 16; *b* Mat. 26. 65; Ch. 8. 58; & 10. 33.

c Is. 53. 7.

always despised both them and it. The pagan Roman had no reason to listen to such a cry, in place of proofs of guilt. They had a law, but his law was the Roman code, and by that there was truly no crime made out against Jesus. ¶ *He ought to die.* They refer to the law against false prophets (Deut. xviii. 20), or possibly to that against blasphemy, which had also been mooted in the Sanhedrim. Lev. xxiv. 16; Deut. xiii. 1–5. For the claim to be *Son of God*, may mean either that Jesus declared Himself the Messiah, who was to be known by that title, and thus be subject to trial on the question whether He were a true or false prophet: or they may signify equality of nature with God (see ch. x. 30–33), which if untrue would subject Him to the second charge. Matt. xxvi. 63, 65. It is to be noted that Jesus died on the charge of making Himself equal with God. If He were not so, how is it possible to reconcile the facts. How came He, a good man, to use the language He did? Why did He not abjure such a claim? Truly, He was the Son of God.

8. *That saying.* Namely, that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Pilate, as a pagan, was a believer more or less in the heathen mythologies, which abound in stories of idol gods appearing among men at different periods. He may therefore have feared Jesus as such a celestial visitant, without entering into the questions of the Jewish parties. The most fearful tales are found in the classics of the horror and remorse of such hapless mortals, as by any chance offended their deities. Pilate felt afraid to proceed now, lest he might bring on himself the vengeance of the Son of Jehovah, whom probably he esteemed the God of the Jews, only as Jupiter was the god of the Romans.

9. *Whence art Thou?* Are you really one of the gods come down to earth? Pilate of course knew His place of birth, but now seeks something from Jesus to lay his fears. ¶ *Jesus gave him no answer.* That he might not cast pearls before swine, nor longer plead with a man who had sneered at the offer of truth. Pilate does not ask this, from a true fear of God, but from a conscience which is too cowardly to do either right or wrong consistently. He asks it from superstition. Jesus teaches only those who are drawn by the Father to listen, those who are willing and docile hearers and lovers of Divine truth. They who will not, or cannot from prejudice or passion be convinced, He mercifully leaves to the error which they perversely choose. Jesus here fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah liii. 7.

10. *Speakest thou not.* The haughty Roman is at a loss. Such quietness without tameness; lofty claim yet poverty of person; patience in suffering and insult, yet dignity in the assertion of truth, he had never seen. He is met by silence, when he sought for a reply for a motive of personal fear, and when any common victim would have replied at once. He had power to save Jesus or to slay Him; yet, he sees no quiver of fear, no sign of doubt in the calm visage of Christ. He is answered when he speaks as a judge, or as a sincere inquirer, but his curiosity is baffled by silence, complete but respectful.

11. *Except it were given thee from above.* "The power you claim is given

couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, [a]speaketh against Cesar.

13 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

a Ac. 17. 7.

you. Use it as a trust from Him who will require an account. I trust so entirely in the Providence of God, that I know that you will be permitted to do to Me, only that which He shall determine." A sublime example is set before all Christians by this evidence of the confidence of our Lord. Even though it be said that He foreknew all things, which we do not, yet He felt and manifested this repose in the hour of danger, this confidence in the love of God, by that same principle of *faith* which we may imitate. For do we not know that "all things work together for good to them that love God," that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ? And faith according to this knowledge may give us strength in our time of trial. ¶ *He that delivered Me.* The singular is used for the plural with great force. He, Judas, the Sanhedrim, the people, each one has the sin. ¶ *Greater sin.* Because instead of seeking the death of Jesus by a sudden, furious outbreak, in which much might have been pardoned to the well-known madness of their passions, they were led by deliberate, meditated malice, to seek to put Him to death in the most ignominious manner by forms of law. They took Him, laid their plans, and, prompted by the devil, they sought to destroy both life and reputation at one fell blow. This was a greater sin, that Jews should raise this charge at a pagan's tribunal. Others interpret these words, "they the Jews have greater sin than thou hast." For they knew Christ, the miracles, the teachings which He showed; Pilate did not; they knew the law, and were bound to it; Pilate was not. But it does not seem well to represent the Saviour as comparing the exact degrees of guilt in His oppressors.

12. *Sought to release Him.* By some ineffectual efforts, when his duty was to have done it by a single word. Pilate is known in history as a bold man, rather than a timid one. He is strangely fearful of the Jews here. ¶ *Cried out.* To gain their end by clamor. They see him wavering, and with one more effort of their rage they carry him with them. ¶ *Cæsar's friend.* And under the stern Roman government, no more fearful words could be whispered at midnight than these. Much more dreadful then was it to hear them from the mob at noonday. Tiberius was then the reigning emperor, a man cruel, suspicious, moody and tyrannical beyond his fellows. This charge, carried by such men as Annas, and well urged with gifts, would destroy men far greater than a Prætor. Thus does wickedness combine itself to do wrong. The casting weight in the mind of Pilate, at the last, was the well-known wickedness of Tiberius, in distant Rome.

13. *Judgment-seat.* This was a part of the castle with a portion elevated above the rest, where solemn judgment was pronounced. It appears that Pilate had, in deference to the prejudice of the Jews concerning the Passover, departed somewhat from his usual custom. He now proceeds to the actual sentence. ¶ *Pavement.* This was an elevated place paved with small square stones of various colors. ¶ *Gabbatha.* This word signifies *a raised place.* Nothing is more common than for one class of people to give certain things a name different from the other classes about them. The Greek

14 And it was the [a]preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? [b] The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.

17 And he [c]bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha;

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 [d]¶ And Pilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, ‖woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it whose it shall be: [e]that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

a Mat. 27. 62. *b* Gen. 49. 10. *c* Num. 15. 36; He. 13. 12. *d* Mat. 27. 37; Mark 15. 26; Lu. 23. 38. ‖ Or, *wrought*. *e* Ps. 22. 18.

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word is from the *pavement*, for the Romans looking down saw chiefly that which was beneath their feet: the Jews coming there to be judged looked up and made their name for it accordingly.

14. The *preparation*. See notes, Mark xv. 42. Friday, the day before the Sabbath of the Jews. ¶ *The sixth hour*. Roman time, about sunrise or six in the morning. St. John must here use Roman time, or we are involved in the greatest difficulties. St. Mark (xv. 25) gives us the time again three hours after this, when Jesus was nailed to the cross, as the third hour, Jewish time, i. e., nine, A. M.

16–22. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 32–37.

22. *What I have written, &c.* He is bold and bitter again, now that the crime is accomplished. He declares that it shall stand as a taunt to the Jews, a biting insult against them for their violence, and for their clamorous cry of "Cæsar's friend," in the morning.

23. *His garments*. All His clothes except the tunic or inner robe, here called coat. They either divided the pieces of His clothing, or tore the outer pallium in four parts. ¶ *His coat*. Tunic or inner garment. ¶ *Without seam*. "The Evangelist describes the tunic, to show that it was of an inferior kind, the tunics commonly worn in Palestine being made of two pieces."—*St. Chrysostom*.

24. *Not rend it*. For it then would be useless. Thus these soldiers, rude

25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of ‖Cleophas,[a] and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the [b]disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

‖ Or, *Clopas*; *a* Lu. 24. 18. *b* Ch. 13. 23.

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, [c]that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, [d]It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

31 The Jews therefore, because

c Ps. 69. 21. *d* Ch. 17. 4.

and cruel pagans, careless of every thing except their perquisites as executioners, anxious to save a poor robe of their victim, add their share to the fulfilment of great prophecies, and their argument to future proofs of the veracity of the gospel history. ¶ *That the scripture.* See Ps. xxii. 18. The early Fathers loved to allegorize this seamless robe, as a symbol of the *unity* which pervades the whole Christian covenant, the Church one with Christ and one in all believers.

26. *The disciple, &c.* John. See note, ch. xiii. 23. ¶ *Woman.* This address was respectful and tender according to the customs of that day and people. See note, chap. ii. 4. ¶ *Behold thy son.* That is, look upon John as henceforth to you in place of a son, to provide for you. Joseph had died before the ministry of Jesus began; Mary was now a widow and certainly *childless*, or else Jesus would have committed her to the care of her children. But He will not leave the virgin mother desolate, but confides her to the gentle, meek St. John, whom He had loved. There is beauty and pathos in this tender care for Mary, which show us that Jesus was in all points of like affections with ourselves. Dying for a world, He bends to cheer the lonely lot of her who had stood to Him in the sacred relation of mother.

27. *Behold thy mother.* "Pay her the duty of a son, accept her as My last testament to your love and care." St John had been peculiarly loved by Jesus, was the youngest of His disciples, was the most affectionate and courageous, for he alone was at the cross, and to him, in all regards, this trust was the most proper. ¶ *From that hour.* Tradition records that Mary abode with St. John until her death, about fifteen years afterwards.

28–30. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 46–50. ¶ *That the scripture, &c.* Ps. lxix. 21.

30. *It is finished.* The great work of redemption, the life, the sufferings of Jesus, the means of salvation, the reconciliation of God to sinful men, the new covenant, all are finished and completed in the cross of Christ. God had "set Him forth a *Propitiation through faith in His blood*, to declare His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. iv. 25. "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace *through the blood of His cross*, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." Col. i. 19, 20. It was this gracious work that was finished, i. e., consummated and brought to its full perfection. See Hymn of Prayer Book 66, which was written by Stennett as a comment upon this verse.

31. *The preparation.* See verse 14.

it was the preparation,[a] that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day, (for that sabbath-day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out [b]blood and water.

[a] De. 21. 23.

[b] 1 Jno. 5. 6, 8.

¶ *That the bodies, &c.* The law of Moses was strict upon this matter, 'that the land be not defiled." Deut. xxi. 23. Especially would this apply in crucifixion and on the eve of a sacred day. The lawgiver in this manner induced a greater horror in the minds of the people in regard of the crimes which brought on them such a curse. The Prophet thus prepared the people for the comprehension of His death, who was "made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13. ¶ *A high day.* A day peculiarly sacred. It was the Sabbath (Saturday) of the Pascal week, the day of the appearing of "all the males before the Lord." See Ex. xxiii. 17. ¶ *Their legs might be broken.* Crucifixion was abolished by the Christian emperor Constantine, about three hundred years after; and a heathen writer, in commending the edict, mentions this custom of breaking the legs. A body suspended to a cross would live several days, so that, in some cases, this breaking the legs was resorted to, to hasten death. The agony would be increased for a time, but sooner ended.

33. *Was dead.* His death had been accompanied by an earthquake, and was witnessed by all around. Dark, gloomy clouds hung over the scene at this hour, "a day known unto the Lord, *not day, nor night*, but at evening time it shall be light." Zech. xiv. 6, 7; Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.

34. *One of the soldiers.* One of those sent to break the legs of the three. It was necessary, we may suppose, that they should make death sure. The heathen soldier only obeys his military discipline, or, at least, a wondering curiosity, in the act of piercing the side of Jesus; but it fulfils ancient prophecy, and opens a symbolic fountain of blood and water, from whence flow the living streams. Compare Zech. xiii. 1; xiv. 8, 9, with 1 John v, 6-8; 1 Pet. iii. 21. ¶ *With a spear.* A long spear, tipped with an iron point, such as the Romans used in war. ¶ *His side.* As it appears, the left side. ¶ *Came there out blood and water.* This is an important fact, as appears from the Apostles thrice declaring it to be true. For, 1. It proves that Jesus was *truly dead.* And it is important to silence heretics or confirm believers, that this should be put beyond doubt. For if He did not die, He did not rise, and our faith becomes vain. The heart in man is surrounded by a membrane called the pericardium, containing a serous matter, rather yellow, and bitter in taste, but of the consistency of water. The spear reached that integument and also the heart, which was yet unchilled by the previous death, and, of course, death was beyond question. Thus the unbeliever is silenced, when he would pretend some fancy about syncope or trance, for no man could live, save by a miracle, after such wounds as Jesus received. But, 2. To silence unbelief is seldom the final object of the events of the Gospel story. Ancients and moderns agree that here was something beyond nature and emphatic. The serous matter of the pericardium, is hardly the *water* which St. John speaks of so particularly here and in his epistle. The old covenant was sealed by water and blood. Heb. ix. 19. The new is sealed with the same. Two

35 And he that saw *it*, bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, [c]that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith, [b] They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 ¶ And after this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus.

a Ex. 12. 46; Nu. 9. 12; Ps. 34. 20.

39 And there came also [c]Nicodemus (which at the first came to Jesus by night) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds *weight*.

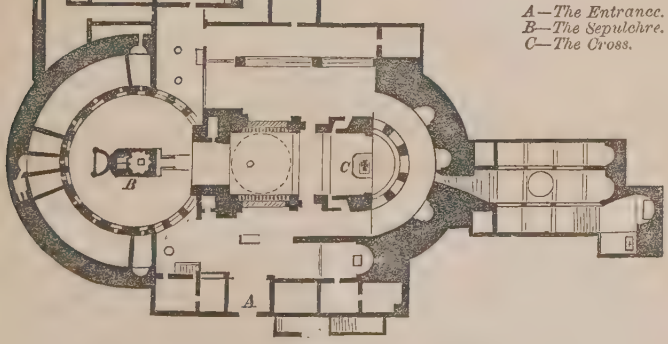
40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and [d]wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 [e]There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation-*day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

b Ps. 22. 16, 17; Zech. 12. 10; Re. 1. 7. *c* Ch. 3. 1, &c.; & 7. 50. *d* Ac. 5. 6. *e* Is. 53. 9.

sacraments commemorate the Passion, the water and the blood. Two great works of grace are signified by them: justification, remission, by the water of baptism; sanctification in the Eucharist. And again they mix; the water of bap-



Ground plan of Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

tism represents the blood of Christ, cleansing from all sin. And the ancients mixed water in the Eucharistic cup, of which Theophylact says: "Shame on them who mix not water with the wine in the holy mysteries;

CHAPTER XX.

Easter Day.

THE [a]first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the [b]other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie;

7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the

a Mat. 28; Mark 16; Lu. 24.

b Ch. 13. 23.

they seem as if they believed not that the water flowed from the side."

35. *He that saw it.* St. John, who is, of course, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." ¶ *Record is true.* His positive assertion as an eye-witness is reliable. St. John could now doubtless stand at the foot of the cross. He also assisted in removing the body. He was able to tell what it was that he saw, and was so impressed with the sight of it, that he solemnly asserts it three times.

36. *Scripture, &c.* That scripture which gave the laws of the Pascal lamb, which was the type of the true Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. See Ex. xii. 46. Jesus expired at the time when the priests were busy in the temple slaying the shadow, i. e. the lambs for the people. He was the Lamb of which Moses had seen the similitude in the mount, and prophesied of Him in *acts* as well as words. Some refer us to Ps. xxxiv. 20.

37. *Another scripture, &c.* Zech. xii. 10. The whole passage of Zechariah is worthy of study. It foretells the first looking upon Jesus pierced, and bitter mourning following, as it happened afterwards in the destruction of the city. And again it foreshadows the final looking upon Him returning in the same body in which He was seen to depart, and in the eternal woe which must follow.

38–42. See notes, Matt. xxvii. 57–61. *The sepulchre was nigh at hand.* The accompanying Ground Plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built upon Mount Calvary in Jerusalem, is believed by many pious and learned men to contain within its walls the Holy Places, the sites of the cross and the sepulchre. Thither have thousands congregated in all ages, to keep alive the memory of the spots, and to worship God upon them for His inestimable gift to mankind.

CHAPTER XX.

1–12. See notes, Matt. xxviii; Mark xvi. St. John in his account of events on the morning of the resurrection follows the line of his own experience. Mary Magdalene first communicates to himself and St. Peter the news, *that the body of Jesus was gone;* they run thither with her following, examine the sepulchre in amazement, for they

"scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: [b]for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to [c]my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and *to* my God and your God.

a Ps. 16. 10; Ac. 2. 25–31; & 13. 34, 35.

b Ps. 16. 10; Mat. 12. 40; Lu. 23. 43; 1 Pe. 3. 19. *c* Ch. 15. 15; He. 2. 11.

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did not understand that He was risen. They must have imagined the body stolen by His enemies.

9. *Knew not the scripture.* Understood not the passages of the Old Testament, which foretold it. They had not yet the gift of the Spirit of truth. See how differently they afterwards taught, out of the same Scripture. Compare Acts ii. 25, 34, 35; xiii. 33. Jesus afterwards explained to them the meaning of the Old Testament. Lu. xxiv. 27. The Epistle to the Hebrews is an inspired comparison of the two Covenants.

14. *Knew not that it was Jesus.* She did not expect to see Him alive. She was overwhelmed with grief and downcast. It shows the grief of Mary that she had not looked up with attention.

16. *Jesus said unto her, Mary.* Nothing could so touchingly prove His presence as the voice of familiar tenderness, calling her own name, as of old. ¶ *Rabboni.* My Master. She starts with joy at the sound, and returns the affectionate salute, with this cry of delight, probably seeking at the same moment to grasp and hold her Lord. Matt. xxviii. 9.

17. *Touch me not.* Mary had sought to touch Jesus, either, 1. To detain Him, as one does a recovered treasure, fearing lest it be again lost. In which case Jesus encourages her by declaring that He is not yet to ascend to God in heaven, but will remain for a season with His disciples. Or, 2. Thinking that He was simply restored to this same mortal life, as Lazarus had been, and was no more to be parted from them. In this case Jesus seems to impress upon her an awe of His presence, that He was no longer in the body of this dying flesh, but waiting for His ascension. Or, 3. The touch of Mary was simply that of human affection, such as belongs only to this life. The touch of Thomas was to confirm his faith. Jesus forbids the one, for He no longer belongs to this world. He orders the other, that we may believe. ¶ *I have not yet ascended.* He had been in the grave, His spirit in Paradise in

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

19 ¶ [c]Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus unto them

[c] 1 Cor. 15. 5.

"the place of departed spirits." To ascend, signified to go to the right hand of God, in body and soul, both forever united. Bodiless souls of saints are in "perfect felicity" with God, but not yet ascended, i. e. with Jesus, where His body now is. ¶ *Brethren.* Ch. xv. 15. ¶ *My Father and your Father.* The resurrection was now a past fact. He foretells the ascension. For going to their common Father, He was "to lead captivity captive, and give gifts unto them," such as He had foretold while in this life.

19. *The same day.* On Sunday, our Lord's day. Two disciples went in the afternoon to Emmaus, and were turned back by seeing Jesus. Returning, they find the other disciples assembled in the city, and while all are awed and wondering at their mutual communications Jesus appears to all at once. ¶ *Doors were shut.* The word *shut* in the original is derived from a word signifying a *key*, so that the shutting was what we call *locking*. And this their fear would of course prompt. And this teaches, with other facts of the same sort, that Jesus had risen in a spiritual body; one wh ch was not subject to the laws of time, space, food and the like, as our bodies now are. As He had burst the bars of death, He now passes out of the circle of our human infirmities, appearing and disappearing, in a manner which we may believe, though we cannot understand it. The disciples met to hear the strange news which was reported by some of their number. For as two of them testified an hour before, "certain women of our company *made us astonished* which were early at the sepulchre, and found not His body, they came saying that they had seen a vision of angels which said that He was alive." Lu. xxiv. 22, 23. It was with great doubts that they had heard the story. How hard to conquer the unbelief of the human heart, and give it spiritual light. These men are yet under the veil of the law and a carnal hope for a kingdom here on earth. ¶ *Came Jesus.* By a power inherent in that body which He then had. The spiritual body is *eternal*. It is therefore different from that which we now bear, yet so derived from this, as to be one with it, as the flower is one with the germ in the seed. 1 Cor. xv. 42–46. "That which was spiritual," was the body of Christ, and these events instruct us to form no low or carnal ideas of its exceeding glory. ¶ *Peace be unto you.* He charms away their fears at the suddenness and strangeness of His coming into their midst. For they might fear Him as a stranger or as a spirit, until they heard Him speak. This was a Hebrew salutation on the meeting of friends.

20. *His hands and His side.* To make them see the wounds which He had received on the cross. "For the healing of doubting hearts, the wounds were still preserved."—*St. Augustine.* He received again His body, no longer earthy and corruptible, but eternal and glorious, yet, for the confirmation of our faith, preserving the indubitable proofs of its identity.

21. *As my Father hath sent me.* As God sent me upon the earth to fulfil His work, and reveal His will for the salvation of men, so do I now commit

again, Peace *be* unto you: [a]as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

23 [b]Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

a Mat. 28. 18; Ch. 17. 18; 2 Tim. 2. 2.

24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

b Mat. 10. 19; & 18. 18.

to you certain ministrative powers under Me, to this same end. I give you authority in all things to your work, even as in a higher rank and dignity, God gave power to Me." It is as necessary that the ministry be sent from Christ, and with due commission now, as it was then. For they are Ambassadors of Christ, acting here as the servants of an absent Lord. This commission was not to the Apostles alone, but to their successors to the end of time.

22. *He breathed on them.* He represented by this action, 1. That they must be endowed by the Holy Spirit, in order to be worthy ministers of His Word. They could not become so either by their own choice or by the votes of any number of men like themselves. The power in ordination is the Holy Ghost. 2. That this Holy Spirit (Breath) came from Him, bound them to Him, made them His Ministers and Ambassadors. "That corporeal breath was not the substance of the Holy Ghost, but to show, *by meet symbol*, that the Holy Ghost proceeded not only from the Father, but the Son. For who would be so mad to say that it was one Spirit which He gave by breathing, and another which He sent after His resurrection."—*St. Augustine.* ¶ *Receive ye, &c.* Receive this pledge and symbol of it, this authority from Me, which is to be made full at the coming of the Holy Ghost. The disciples did not *act as Apostles*, until that Pentecost. This commission was anticipative of it. See Acts i. 4; ii.

23. *Whose soever sins ye remit.* To remit is to pardon, to pass over. These words are used in the office of the Prayer Book in the ordination of Priests, and are at the foundation of our Forms of Absolution, because being the words of Christ at this first appointment of the ministry, they seem proper to express the perpetual intention of the Spirit. They are supposed consistent with such ministerial powers, in the matter of ecclesiastical absolution and discipline as are held by the greater part of sound Christians every where. Ministers do not *forgive sins*;—that God only can do. They do not simply utter the terms of pardon; that requires no commission. But they are authorized to apply those terms according to Scriptural and Church laws, to individuals, who repent or rebel; and actually to administer the discipline of the Church here, by receiving those whom they shall believe to be true penitents into the fold, or excluding open offenders from it. And they pretend not to go beyond the maxims of common reason, or to have an infallible knowledge and decision in these premises, knowing that they only *remit* sins to a higher assize; where, if wrongly passed over here, they will be punished there, or retain them now, *glad* if they then find, that the All-seeing Eye of God can see the innocence of the individual through the cloud of circumstantial evidence, which condemned him here.

25. *Except I shall see, &c.* It is not necessary for us now to blame or praise the incredulity of Thomas. The other

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, [b]Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

a 1 Jno. 1. 1.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: [b]blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

30 And many [c]other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

b 2 Cor. 5. 7; 1 Pe. 1. 8. *c* Ch. 21. 25.

ten disciples did not believe till *they saw*. Luke xxiv. 22–25. He simply asserts that he is of the same mind. True now ten men are asserting this fact, but he has been with them as an equal too long, to receive a fact which concerns him as well as them, on unequal terms. On the other hand positively refusing to believe except on the evidence of his senses, he has given greater credibility to the facts. There could be no imposition, where there is such carefulness. He like the rest were "fools and slow of heart to believe"—but so are we by nature. And their difficulty now lightens ours. We may trust those who were so scrupulous, and yield to the force of their testimony.

26. *After eight days.* On the return of the first day of the week, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning. It is believed that the Apostles at an early period devoted this day to the worship of our Lord. See Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10. Our Saviour did not abide with His disciples as He had done before His death, but appears to them now only at intervals.

28. *My Lord and my God.* These words in English, such is our profaner habit of mind, may sound as an exclamation of surprise. In the original they are rather an address to Jesus—Thou my Lord and my God—Thou art such. As an idle exclamation of wonder, they would have been profane. Hence we are right in giving them the sense of all antiquity, as a plain confession of the belief of St. Thomas in the Divinity of Christ. His doubts are scattered by the wonderful proofs of the resurrection body, true in every lineament and wound. He gives his heart and will to Christ and confesses Him his Lord—to rule him—his God to be worshipped by him for the future.

29. *Because thou hast seen Me.* "You have seen this body and arrived at one stage of faith; but there is to be a higher, when I am ascended to heaven, and am known by my disciples in spiritual faiths." The *not seen* was to come after the descent of the Holy Spirit; for then He was in heaven and appeared only to two or three. For true faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, would be wrought in the soul by the Spirit. And faith would be then attended with the blessings of grace, and therefore would be unto salvation.

30. *Other signs.* Other marked proofs, by which the disciples were convinced. The word "signs" does not mean exclusively miracles, but marks by which the disciples knew that Jesus had truly risen. ¶ *In the presence of his disciples.* For Jesus appeared only to them. He was no longer Himself a teacher in mortal flesh of others, but was henceforth to be known to the world by His disciples.

31. *These are written.* Those written in this Gospel. ¶ *That ye might believe.* He addresses himself to mankind generally. Ye, who read this Gospel. This

31 But these are written, [a]that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that [b]believing ye might have life through his name.

CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias: and on this wise shewed he *himself*.

a Lu. 1. 4. *b* Ch. 3. 15, 16; & 5. 24.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

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was his design in writing it. He has kept to it throughout, bringing out one after another the sublimer doctrines of the Lord Jesus, and sustaining them by the miracles and acts of His life, with a skill and veracity which marks a profound mind inspired by the Spirit which led him into all truth. He wrote not to draw a picture, but to win souls to belief in Christ unto salvation. He silently destroyed one by one the heresies of his day, and gave to the early Church weapons by which they conquered the forces of unbelief. His Gospel to-day forms the key-stone of the Scriptural canon, sustaining the profound doctrines of the faith, and binding all into one, with the sacred purpose inscribed in it all—Jesus the Messiah! the Son of God! giving life through His name.

The verses 24–31 are chosen for the Gospel of the Feast of St. Thomas, Dec. 21. He exercised the office of Apostle among the Parthians and travelled as far as India, where he was martyred by the hostility of the Brachmans.

"Almighty and everliving God, who for the greater confirmation of the faith, didst suffer Thy holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful of Thy Son's resurrection; grant us so perfectly and without all doubt to believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reproved. Hear us, O Lord, through the same Jesus Christ, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be all honor and glory, now and for evermore. Amen."

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *Sea of Tiberias.* In Galilee, where He had promised to meet with them. Mark xiv. 28; xvi. 7. It seems to have been important that they should see Him there, away from the scenes of danger, and in repose, that they might receive peculiar instructions concerning their future conduct, where they had once forsook all and followed Him. St. Luke declares that our Lord for forty days on different occasions was "speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," that is, pertaining to the Church which they were to establish. This teaching was probably given on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. ¶ *On this wise.* In this way. As follows.

2. *There were together.* In one place or village. ¶ *Two other.* Some say Philip and Andrew: others, two of the inferior order of the seventy. Nathanael is mentioned here, who is elsewhere supposed to be called Bartholomew.

3. *I go a fishing.* "I for one return to my active labor for support for the present." The others join him. Jesus appears, after their labor is shown to be misplaced, being a want of faith in Him to take care of them in His absence, and by a word directs them where to procure abundance. It is said, that want of occupation was disreputable among the Jews. Doubtless it was or ought to have been. But Peter and the others here seem to fall back on

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, ‖Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, [a]Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore [b]that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them,

‖ Or, *Sirs*. *a* Lu. 5. 4, &c. *b* Ch. 18. 23.

their labor by design, from lack of faith in the protection of Jesus. So long as He had been with them, they had wanted nothing. They cannot walk without sight for a little while. Labor itself is ever reputable, but is not to be the choice of those who are commissioned to higher works. "Follow Me," said our Saviour, "and I will make you *fishers of men*." What had such to do with menial labor on the Sea of Galilee, when the stormy sea of the world was waiting for the ark of safety to be launched. ¶ *Caught nothing.* Their labor was vain. They were to learn where they must look for support—to Jesus, not themselves.

4. *Knew not that it was Jesus.* Their eyes were dim, because their design was erroneous. It may have been twilight, but it seems to indicate rather a spiritual twilight. They were astray. They took thought for the morrow, rather than seeking first the kingdom of God.

5. *Children.* Poor little ones, children in faith. For (ch. xx. 17) He had called them *brethren.* They are now children in not understanding where their strength lay. It is also used as a term of affection by St. John. 1 Ep. ii. 18. ¶ *Any meat.* Any *food*, so the old English word signified: so the original means. Has your toil brought you any thing?

6. *On the right side.* "Yet you came fishing to support yourself, lest My word should fail you. Now behold the issue. Cast in at My direction and you shall have more than enough." There was of course no merit in the right side, but it is mentioned to show how easy it was for Him to supply their wants, how evidently their toil had been made useless by their unbelief. Of course ministers may at times labor like other men for food, for we now live under God's general providence. The disciples at this time were the subjects of a special providence, as they are now taught.

7. *It is the Lord.* "This is the wonderful power of our Lord." Instantly they catch the meaning of the work of Jesus, and through the meaning infer His presence—ashamed of their incredulity. ¶ *His fisher's coat.* Some garment used by fishermen, which could be put off or on quickly. "A linen coat, such as Thamian and Tyrian fishermen throw over them, when they have nothing else on, or even over their other clothes."—*Theophylact.* ¶ *Into the sea.* With characteristic energy. He probably swam or waded to the shore.

8. *Two hundred cubits.* About three

Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to the land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus said unto them, [a]Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the

[a] Ac. 10. 41.

[b] See Ch. 20. 19. 26.

hundred and fifty feet. *Dragging the net.* The load of fish was too great for the boat, and they draw it toward the shore.

9. *A fire, &c.* A second teaching of the ease with which Jesus could supply their wants. They find that the fish they have brought are superfluous. All that is necessary is there, without a hand being raised. Jesus no longer works with existing materials, but in a still more wonderful way.

11. *Great fishes, an hundred fifty and three.* A number unusually large, so that it was a marvel the net could hold them. They were great fishes, a bountiful supply, a free support to the doubting party.

12. *Come and dine.* Jesus is the host, and He spreads this repast there in the solitude of that still morning, to teach His disciples a lesson worthy the occasion.

13. *Bread and fish likewise.* It is not said here, that the design of our Lord was to reprove His disciples for their want of trust in Him; but surely it is plainly the moral of it all. Why is He so silent? Why does He not make Himself known? Why do they not ask, Who art Thou? except that they are truants to duty. And no other fit reason can be given for this miracle, which will explain all its parts. There is never any waste in the miracles of Christ. And if it had been only to prove His presence, a smaller number would have done it. But the silence and timidity of the disciples, the temporary distance of manner of Jesus, the previous vanity of their labor, and the sudden supply, all point to this lesson, that Jesus would have them trust in His special care over them, and give themselves wholly to His work.

14. *The third time.* That is, the third time to so many at once. Twice He had appeared to them, assembled together on the first day of the week. Ch. xx. 19, 26.

15. *More than these.* Two interpretations of these words exist, almost equally supported by authority. 1. The Greek seems naturally to read, "Lovest thou Me more than thou lovest *these things*, i. e., thy fishing or life as of old." *These things* are of course only symbolical of his former pursuit, and the question seems to imply this much: "I called you away from this mode of life, when you were ignorant of what was before you. You followed Me dreaming of a temporal kingdom and earthly wealth. That dream is nearly over, and now a solemn reality, a troubled future gathers around you. Choose now which you will; I will have you my servant only by free choice. Do you love Me, so that you can give up this attempt at a return to your nets, and go on the work on which I am about to send you? 2. Do you love

second time, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou know-

a Ac. 20. 28; He. 13. 20; 1 Pe. 2. 25; & 5. 2, 4.

Me more than these other disciples love Me? Of this Peter had made his boast. Matt. xxvi. 3. He manifested the same in his eagerness in seeking Him first through the water. There is a solemn grace and beauty in this scene. Jesus would recall His follower to self-examination and meditation, before the coming of the Pentecostal Spirit, that it may not come into an unprepared heart. ¶ *Thou knowest that I love Thee.* No longer does he say, *more*, for he remembers that he had denied Jesus, but he leaves it to the Lord Himself to justify his affection. In either sense of the question he answers freely. ¶ *Feed My lambs.* Show your love for Me in the care of those who are to believe in Me. Jesus had before commanded Peter, after he had recovered himself from his fall, "*to strengthen his brethren.*" Lu. xxii. 32. And the sense of his own weakness acting upon his energetic character, doubtless fitted him for the work of the ministry in a peculiar manner. To feed the lambs of a flock is the work of a good shepherd. Peter was to exercise this work in preaching the word, strengthening the weak, recalling the erring, patiently guiding and protecting all the converts, yet weak as lambs compared with his more robust and tried faith.

16. *Feed my sheep.* A different word is used here, which implies more of *guidance or governing*, the other simply *feeding*. Some argue for the supremacy

est all things; Thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: [b]but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

b Ac. 20. 28; He. 13. 20; 1 Pe. 2. 25; & 5. 2, 4. *c* Ch. 13. 36; 2 Pe. 1. 14.

of St. Peter over the other Apostles, from these words, as if he were commanded to exercise authority over them. But truly that is but a weak superstructure, whose base rests on a metaphor. If Jesus, the Eternal Truth, had intended His Church to rest on such a vicegerency in Peter and Popes, He must be supposed to have known the value of plain language, and not veiled His meaning in figures of speech, which neither Apostles nor the early Church could discover. Any supremacy of St. Peter's is a fiction, for he appears only an equal in the Acts of the Apostles, while St. Paul declares himself his equal (2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11) and on occasion rebuked and *withstood* him. Gal. ii. 11.

17. *The third time.* Three times Peter had denied his Master. Now he is gently reminded of it by this form of questioning, and affectionately reproved in the presence of the other disciples, over whom He had before boasted. It is not the angry rebuke of a master, but the love of a friend, restoring him to his place, as an equal with the rest. For his fall had made him lower than they, and it is possible that it may have made him doubtful whether the favor of Jesus would again return to him.

18. *When thou wast young.* When he was a young man, before Christ had called him to become a disciple. ¶ *Girdedst thyself.* The Jews in walking, laboring, or any active employment, drew the outer robe up, and girded it around the waist, that it should not impede their

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?)

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do?*

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry[a] till I come, what *is that* to thee? Follow thou me.

a Mat. 16. 28.

motions. To do so is the part of an active, strong, self-reliant man. Such had been Peter, dependent on himself, confident, energetic, able and willing to obtain the support of himself and family by his own labor. And on this character and personal energy he was too apt to rely, instead of seeking strength from God. He did not willingly cast his care on another. In this he was to become a different man, and learn to trust God and become strong in Him. ¶ *Old.* Peter was one of the oldest apostles at the time of his call, and seems to have lived thirty years after this prophecy. ¶ *Stretch forth thy hands.* As a weak old man, who in decrepitude *must* receive help from others. Perhaps no vision was more distasteful to Peter, none in his own mind more improbable. He should become *weak* in that worldly energy and self-reliance in which he then took pride, and strong in the Lord and in that humility and faith which adorned his epistles. ¶ *Shall gird thee.* Another shall bind thy pallium around thy waist whenever thou wouldst move. This was not literally fulfilled, as the picture was meant only as a prophetic hieroglyphic, to shadow a meaning that should act as a continual warning to him. Peter probably did not become decrepit. It shadows his riper Christian state, leaning on God, trusting in Him, and also His death with outstretched arms on a cross. ¶ *Whither thou wouldst not.* As attendants do an old man who has arrived at second childhood. As they did St. Peter when they crucified him.

19. *By what death, &c.* That is, that he should die by the cross, and as that was a favorite Roman punishment, probably by their hands. St. Peter is said by Origen to have preached the Gospel "in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia. And at length coming to Rome, he was crucified with his head downwards; himself having desired that it might be in that manner." This account is sustained by all early tradition. His death occurred at least thirty years after this warning. ¶ *Glorify God.* This was a new mode of regarding death, to which pagan philosophy had nothing like. For God has been glorified, and true religion spread by the constancy of such men as Peter unto death. St. Peter had this warning before him constantly, as is evident from his Epistle. See 1 Pet. ii. 19–25; iv. 16, 19. He refers to it near the time of his death. 2 Pet. i. 14, 15.

20. *The disciple, &c.* St. John. See ch. xiii. 24, 25.

21. *What shall this man do?* What shall become of him? If I am to stretch forth my hands, &c., how will it be with him? There was in most things an equality between these two disciples, as will appear on examination. And between such, there is always danger of some spirit of jealousy or suspicion, at least a greater, *more pointed* interest in each other than in others. If Peter was jealous, and so asked this question, he was justly rebuked. If he had grace to believe that the warning was made in love to him, he may well have supposed that some similar event would occur in the life of St. John. And the answer of Jesus is simply a refusal to gratify his curiosity.

22. *That he tarry.* That is, live on

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things:[c] and we know that his testimony is true.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, [b]I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

[a] Ch. 19. 35; 3 Jno. 12.

[b] Amos 7. 10.

earth. ¶ *Till I come.* Which may mean the first coming of Christ, at the destruction of Jerusalem, as some suppose. St. John did actually survive the holy city. Or 2. It may mean till the last coming of Christ, as others think. To which event of course he did not live. It would mean then, "If it is my will that he never die, what is that to thee? keep in mind your own warning." St. John was about ninety years of age when he wrote this Gospel at Ephesus, A.D. 97. He lived to a very great age, so that at last he indeed "stretched forth his hands, and others girded him," for he was carried by young men to the assemblies of the Christians. He died peacefully at Ephesus, A.D. 100, being then according to Epiphanius 94, though some say 98, others 104, others 120. He was buried near that city, and some of the Fathers mention his sepulchre as being there in their times. ¶ *What is that to thee?* Though you love him dearly, can you not trust him to Me? We need not suppose this a severe rebuke, but rather an intimation, similar to that recorded Luke xiii. 23, 24. For our business is to work out our salvation, and not perplex our minds with the justice and mercy of God to others.

23. *That saying.* This mistake was so natural, and spread so wide, that it continued till a late age. We find St. Augustine urging arguments against certain persons who held, in spite of this recorded denial, that St. John was to live to the end of the world and then appear with Elias. He points to his tomb at Ephesus. "But perhaps he will allow that John still lies in his sepulchre at Ephesus, but asleep, not dead: and will give us a proof that the soil over his grave is moist and watery owing to his respiration, &c." So difficult is it to destroy in men's minds the love of the marvellous. They could weave fictions to dispute the plain denial of St. John himself.

24. *This is the disciple, &c.* That is, this John is the beloved disciple. ¶ *We know.* It is known. For John wrote this Gospel for the elders and Bishops of the Church of Ephesus, where he was well known and greatly revered. He was now old in years and in his Apostleship, and could speak in such terms, among his own people and flock. He had with them the credit which belonged to a long life of holiness and usefulness in the ministry.

25. *Many other things.* That is, This Gospel is only an epitome, a short sketch of such things as were necessary for proving his main design, "that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." Ch. xx. 31. There were other miracles, graces, discourses, acts of love, mercy, piety, and patience, which it would require an infinite labor to record. ¶ *I suppose, &c.* This is an *hyperbole*, meaning simply, it would be almost impossible for any man to record all that Jesus did and said in the course of thirty years. See Dan. iv. 20; John xii. 19. And when we remember, that added to the freshness of memory which a love like that of St. John for Jesus would retain, he was also inspired by the Spirit of God, to remember all the acts and words of Christ in all their relations to the past, present and future, we may feel that nothing less

than a hyperbole would be in place here. The sacred writers did not lose the usual feelings of other men, only they were kept from error in their records. And no one has been deceived by this hyperbole to suppose any thing else than this, that the labor of recording all the life of Christ, in all its relations, would surpass the powers of any individual, and exceed the wants of any soul seeking the way of salvation by Him. ¶ *Amen.* So be it. Truth. He adds this, as it were, his solemn seal and sign manual. He is done. He has spoken truth. He will abide by it as his safety. He seals his work for the Church. He does the same with the book of Revelation. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS,

CONDENSED.

(Dr. Jarvis' Introd., pp. 565–592.)

St. John's Introduction, ch. i. 1–18; St. Luke's do., i. 1–4; St. Matthew's, i. 1–18.
The events before the Birth of Christ. Matt. i. 18–24; Luke i. 5–80.
The Birth of our Lord—*Bethlehem*, Dec. 25; 7th year before A. D. Matt. i. 25; Luke ii. 6, 7.
The Shepherds. Luke ii. 8, 20.
The Circumcision, Jan. 1—6th year before A. D., and Presentation in the Temple, Feb. 2. Luke ii. 21–40.
The Visit of the Magi—Bethlehem. Epiphany. Jesus in his *second* year. Matt. i–18.
Herod dies, March 21, of this year.
The boy Jesus twelve years old—Jerusalem. True Era 12. Luke ii. 41–52.
St. John Baptist begins his Ministry—Judea, A. D. 24; True Era 30. Matt. iii. 1–12; Mark i. 1–8; Luke iii. 1–17.
Jesus Baptized—Epiphany, Jan. 6, A. D. 25; True Era 31. Bethabara. Matt. iii. 13–17; Mark i. 1–9; Luke iii. 21–23.
The Quadrigesimal Fast—Wilderness. Matt. iv. 1–11; Mark i. 12, 13. Luke iv. 1–13.
St. John's Narrative. John i. 15 to ii. 13.

The First Passover, *Thursday, March* 29. True Era 31.

St. John's Narrative. John ii. 14 to iii. 24.
The dispute of the Jews and John's disciples. Luke iii. 18; John iii. 25–36.
John Baptist imprisoned. Luke iii. 19, 20.
Feast of Dedication—Jerusalem, Dec. 1–8. Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; John iv. 1, 2.
Conversation at Sychar. John iv. 3–42.
Returns to Galilee. Mark i. 14, 15; Luke iv. 14, 15; John iv. 43–45.
Second Miracle in Cana. John iv. 46–54.
Violence in Nazareth. Luke iv. 16–30.
Takes up his abode in Capernaum. Matt. iv. 13–17.

January, A. D. 26; True Era 32.
Calls four disciples—Galilee. Matt. iv. 18–22; Mark i. 16–20.
Teaches in Synagogue of Capernaum, and Miracle. Mark i. 21–28; Luke iv. 31–37.
Miracles. Matt. viii. 14–18; Mark i. 29–38; Luke iv. 38–43.
First circuit of Galilee. Matt. iv. 23–25; Mark i. 39; Luke iv. 44.
Heals a leper. Matt. viii. 1–4; Mark i. 40–45; Luke v. 12–15.
(Sermon on the Mount. Matt. v.–vii.)
Miraculous draught of fishes. Luke v. 1–16.
Cure of paralytic, and discourses—Capernaum. Matt. ix. 1–17; Mark ii. 1–22; Luke v. 17–39.

The Second Passover, *Wednesday, April* 17. True Era 32.

John's Narrative—Jerusalem. John v. 1–47.
Discussion on Sabbath—Galilee. Matt. xii. 1–21; Mark ii. 23 to iii. 12; Luke vi. 1–11.
Choice of Disciples. Matt. x. 1–4; Mark iii. 13–19; Luke vi. 12–16.
Here some place Sermon on Mount. Matt. v.–vii.; Luke vi. 17–49.
Cure of Centurion's servant. Matt. viii. 5; Luke vii. 1–10.
The widow's son—Nain. Luke vii. 11–17.
Discourse. Matt. xi. 2–30; Luke vii. 18–35.

Simon, the Pharisee, gives a feast—Jerusalem. Luke vii. 36–50.
Second circuit through Galilee. Luke viii. 1–3.
Crowds gather about Him—Capernaum. Mark iii. 20–22.
Discourses. Matt. xii. 22–50; Mark iii. 22–35; Luke xi. 14–32, and viii. 19–21.
Rebukes Pharisees. Luke xi. 37–54.
Parables. Matt. xiii. 1–52; Mark iv. 1–34; Luke viii. 4–18.
Events on the sea and at Gadara. Matt. viii. 23 to ix. 1; Mark iv. 35 to v. 21; Luke viii. 22–40.
Two miracles in Capernaum. Matt. ix. 18–26; Mark v. 22–43; Luke viii. 41–56.
Other miracles. Matt. ix. 27–34.
Last visit to Nazareth. Matt. xiii. 52–58; Mark vi. 1–6.

January, A. D. 27. True Era 33.
Sends the twelve disciples on a circuit—Galilee. Matt. ix. 36 to xi. 1; Mark vi. 7–13; Luke ix. 1–6.
Third circuit, by Himself. Matt. ix. 35; Mark vi. 6.
John Baptist put to death—Castle of Machaerus. Matt. xiv. 1–12; Mark vi. 14–29; Luke ix. 7–9.
Miracle and discourse. The people anxious to make Him a king. Matt. xiv. 13–36; Mark vi. 31–56; Luke ix. 10–17; John vi. 1–71.

The Third Passover, *April* 6. True Era 33.

His life sought—Jerusalem. Matt. xv. 1; Mark vii. 1; John vii. 1.
Events in various places of refuge. Matt. xv. 2 to xvi. 12; Mark vii. 2 to viii. 26.
St. Peter's Confession, near Cæsarea Philippi. Matt. xvi. 13–28; Mark viii. 27 to ix.; Luke ix. 18–27.
Transfiguration, Mount Tabor, *one year before the Ascension.* Thursday, May 22. Matt. xvii. 1–23; Mark ix. 2–32; Luke ix. 28–45.
Payment of tax—Capernaum. Matt. xvii. 24–27.
Conversations during journey to and from Jerusalem. Matt. xviii. 1–35; Mark ix. 33–50 Luke ix. 46–50.
James and John rebuked. Luke ix. 51–56.
Others reproved. Matt. viii. 19–22; Luke ix. 57–62.
The seventy disciples appointed—Galilee. Luke x. 1–16.
St. Luke's narrative. Luke x. 25–42; xi. 1–13; xii. 1–59; xiii. 1–21; x. 17–24; xiii. 22–35; xiv. 1–35; xv. 1–32; xvi. 1–31; xvii. 1–10.
St. John's Narrative. John vii., viii., and ix.
St. Luke's resumed. Luke xvii. 11–19.
Jesus visits the region beyond Jordan. Matt. xix. 1, 2; Mark x. 1.
Parables "beyond Jordan." Luke xvii. 20 to xviii. 14.
Question of divorce. Matt. xix. 3–12; Mark x. 2–12.
Other events in same place. Matt. xix. 13 to xx. 28; Mark x. 13–45; Luke xviii. 15–33.
Two blind men healed—Jericho. Matt. xx. 29–34; Mark x. 46–52; Luke xviii. 35 to xix. 1.
St. Luke's Narrative. Luke xix. 2–28.
St. John's Narrative. John x. to xii. 11.

Passion Week, *Sunday*, *March* 21. True Era 34.

Enters Jerusalem and the temple, driving out the buyers. Matt. xxi. 1–17; Mark xi. 1–11; Luke xix. 29–46; John xii. 12–36.
Monday. Sees the fig-tree. Matt. xxi. 18, 19; Mark xi. 12–14.
Drives out the buyers a *second* time. Mark xi. 15–19.
Tuesday. The fig-tree withered. Matt. xxi. 20–22; Mark xi. 20–26.
Parables, and discourses in temple. Matt. xxi. 23 to xxiv. 2; Mark xi. 27 to xiii. 2; Luke xx. 1 to xxi. 6.
Prophecy concerning the city—Olivet. Matt. xxiv. 3–51; Mark xiii. 3–37; Luke xxi. 7–36.
Parables on way to Bethany. Matt. xxv. 1–46.
Night spent in Bethany. Matt. xxvi. 1–13; Mark xiv. 1–9; Luke xxi. 37, 38.
Wednesday. At supper with the twelve. John xiii. 1–30.
Judas betrays Him. Matt. xxvi. 14–16; Mark xiv. 10, 11; Luke xxii. 1, 2.
St. John's Narrative. John xiii. 31 to xiv. 31.

The Fourth Passover, *Thursday*, *March* 25, A. D. 28. True Era 34.

Preparation for Passover. Matt. xxvi. 17–20; Mark xiv. 12–17; Luke xxii. 7–18.
The Pascal Supper, after sunset—Judas brought out. Matt. xxvi. 21 25; Mark xiv. 18–21; Luke xxii. 21–23.

The Lord's Supper, or Holy Sacrament. Matt. xxvi. 26–29; Mark xiv. 22–25; Luke xxii. 19–30.

St. John's Narrative. John xv. to xviii.

Gethsemane. Matt. xxvi. 30–54; Mark xiv. 26–47; Luke xxii. 39–51; John xviii. 1–12.

Jesus carried to Annas. Luke xxii. 54; John xvii. 15–17, 22–24.

First denial of Peter before cock crow. Matt. xxvi. 69, 70; Mark xiv. 66–68; Luke xxii. 55–57; John xviii. 18.

Friday, 26th March—Hall of Caiaphas. Matt. xxvi. 59–64; Mark xiv. 55–62.

Second and third denials of Peter. Matt. xxvi. 71–75; Mark xiv. 69–72; Luke xxii. 58–62; John xviii. 25–27.

Sentence passed by Sanhedrim—4th watch, 3 to 6 A. M. Matt. xxvi. 65–68; Mark xiv. 63–65; Luke xxii. 63–71.

Carried to Pilate—Castle of Antonia. Matt. xxvii. 1–14; Mark xv. 1–5; Luke xxiii. 1–5; John xxviii. 28–38.

Sent to Herod Antipas, and returned. Luke xxiii. 5–12.

Tried and condemned—6 o'clock, A. M. Matt. xxvii. 15–26; Mark xv. 6–15; Luke xxiii. 13–25; John xviii. 39 to xix. 16.

Judas repents. Matt. xxvii. 3–10.

Jesus led out of city, Via Dolorosa. Matt. xxvii. 27–32; Mark xv. 16–21; Luke xxiii. 26–31; John xix. 17.

CRUCIFIXION—9 A. M. till 3 P. M. Matt. xxvii. 33–44; Mark xv. 22–33; Luke xxiii. 33–44; John xix. 18–27.

Death—3 P. M. Matt. xxvii. 46–56; Mark xv. 34–41; Luke xxiii. 45–49; John xix. 28–37.

Hasty burial. Matt. xxvii. 57–60; Mark xv. 42–46; Luke xxiii. 50–54; John xix. 38–42.

Two companies of women. Matt. xxvii. 61; Mark xv. 47; Luke xxiii. 54–56.

Saturday—Sabbath. Tomb sealed. Matt. xxvii. 62–66.

The Marys and Salome buy spices. Saturday evening. Mark xvi. 1.

Easter Sunday—March 28. RESURRECTION, about 3 A. M. Matt. xxviii. 2–4.

The Marys on their way to tomb. Matt. xxviii. 1; John xx. 1.

Find the tomb empty. Matt. xxviii. 5–8; Mark xvi. 2–8; John xx. 1, 2.

Peter and John come, followed by Mary Magdalene. Luke xxiv. 12; John xx. 3–10.

Mary, first of all others, sees the Lord. Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 11–17.

With the other two women sees Him again. Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.

A second company of women see two angels. Luke xxiv. 1–9.

The women all tell the disciples. Mark xvi. 10, 11; Luke xxiv. 10, 11; John xx. 18.

The soldiers and priests. Matt. xxviii. 11–15.

Evening—way to Emmaus. Jesus appears to two disciples. Mark xvi. 12, 13; Luke xxiv. 13–35.

Appears to ten in Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 36–48; xx. 19–25.

Sunday, April 4. Appears to eleven. Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 26, 27.

St. John's Narrative—Galilee. John xx. 28 to xxi. 25.

On mountain in Galilee appears twice. Matt. xxviii. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 6, 7.

Continued teaching them 40 days, of the Church. Acts i. 3; Matt. xxviii. 18–20; Mark xvi. 15–18; John xx. 21–23.

Ascended from Olivet—May 6. Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 50–53; Acts i. 2.

The twelve made Apostles by the Holy Ghost. *Pentecost*, Sunday, 16th May. Mark xvi. 20; Acts ii. 1–42.

THE END.

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